Industrial Worker

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

July/August 2005 #1676 Vol. 102 No. 7 $1.00 / 75 p

Making G8 history
Protesters seek real change, not Brownwash **5**

Staughton Lynd on 100 years of the IWW
Solidarity, internationalism, direct action & democracy key to building a free society **7-10**

Parliament to dock IWWs pay
Scottish politicians to strip Wobs of a month's wages **12**

Iraqi oil unionists tour 25 U.S. cities

BY HARRY SIITONEN, BERKELEY

Two top officials of the independent General Union of Oil Workers in Iraq toured the San Francisco Bay Area in June and spoke to hundreds of unionized workers and the general public at several well-attended meetings.

President Hassan Juma'a Awad Al Asade and General Secretary Faleh Abbood Umara were sponsored by U.S. Labor Against the War, several Bay Area central labor councils, Bay Area Labor Committee for Peace & Justice, and other organizations. An enthusiastic overflow audience greeted them at St. Joseph the Worker Church in Berkeley as they gave us eyewitness accounts of their lives and work in U.S.-occupied Iraq, where they described the dangers and death they faced as unionists on a daily basis.

GUOW is a federation representing workers in ten energy-related trade union councils, active in nine Iraqi companies which constitute the oil sector in Basrah, Amara and Nassiyan. GUOW is the largest single union in Iraq, with 23,000 members, and is independent of the two labor federations, the Iraqi Federation of Workers' Trade Unions, influenced by the pro-U.S. National Accord Party and the Iraqi Communist Party, and the Federation of Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq, led by the recently formed Worker-communist Party of Iraq. But it does cooperate with their affiliates on the local level.

All unions were banned under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein except for the toady organizations it controlled, which served their Baath Party masters rather than the workers. Hussein banned all public sector unions, which encompass 70 percent of the work force. Two years ago, when the unions emerged from underground or formed for the first time, the U.S. occupation denied them the right to represent public sector workers, citing Saddam Hussein's old law. But "legal" or not, tens of thousands have organized, struck, demonstrated and made gains, forcing the occupation to give ground.

One of the first of these actions was by the oil workers of Basrah. With the U.S.-led military invasion, British troops took over in Basrah. Oil worker activists surfaced and began to organize, although there was a lot of fear and it was a struggle to get started. Initially, they only signed up about 100 workers. Since the fighting was still going on, the occupation authorities allotted refinery workers a bonus over and above the $35 a month they were given in pay to keep production going. But when the fighting subsided in the city, occupation authorities took the bonus away.

The refinery workers engaged in some good old Wobbly-style direct action. As labor photojournalist David Bacon described it, the workers blocked the road at the refinery gates with a large crane so that trucks loaded with petroleum were unable to drive out. A long line of trucks stretched back from the gate. British troops, armed to the teeth, drove up with their humvees and demanded that the crane be removed. Not until you reinstate the bonus, the workers said.

The British commander then threatened that if it wasn't removed immediately, they'd shoot. Immediately, ten workers dove under the petroleum trucks and held up cigarette lighters saying, "Go ahead and shoot!" Bacon said the soldiers backed down from their threat; that, after all, "they were sons and daughters of the English working class." And the workers were given their bonuses back.

***Solidarity:** continued page 14*

Letter: Bankrupt Unions **2** Starbucks Union-Busting **3** Millwright's Lament **4** Mr. Block **12** Marching to the Left **14** Australian Workers Defend Unions **16**

Industrial Worker
PO Box 13476
Philadelphia, PA 19101

ISSN 0019-8870

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Periodicals Postage
PAID
Philadelphia, PA
and additional
mailing offices

Learning from our past, looking to our future



Mark Ross shared stories of some of the old-time Wobblies he has known during the IWW's centenary conference in Chicago.

Hundreds of people participated in June events commemorating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Industrial Workers of the World. The festivities kicked off with a concert by Utah Phillips and John McCutcheon which packed Chicago's Hothouse club and raised over $2,000 for the IWW organizing fund.

More than 350 people participated in the weekend centenary conference at the University of Illinois-Chicago campus. William LeFevre, curator of the IWW archives at Wayne State University, debuted a traveling centenary exhibit (now in Winnipeg).

Some 150 Wobblies and guests packed the Svithiod Hall (a Swedish fraternal association) June 24, for a banquet organized by the Chicago General Membership Branch. We dug into a bountiful feast of vegetarian hobo stew, salad and venison stroganoff, while listening to a rousing speech by General Executive Board chair Mark Damron and musical performances by the Citizens Band and Charlie King and Len Wallace. (John Berquist emceed the event, Utah Phillips and General Secretary-Treasurer Alexis Buss also spoke briefly.) Damron's speech focused on the need for education, agitation and organization to confront the bosses, whose brutal reign continues to bring untold misery to workers all around the planet. The evening closed with rousing renditions of "The Internationale" and "Solidarity Forever."

Earlier in the day, a large delegation traveled to Waldheim Cemetery, where the Haymarket Martyrs are buried alongside a number of other labor activists including IWW cofounder Lucy Parsons and some of Big Bill Haywood's and Joe Hill's ashes.

General Secretary-Treasurer Alexis Buss gave a short talk to open the conference, stressing the continuity between the issues that faced workers in 1905 and the crisis facing the labor movement today (her talk appears on page 6), and the Citizens' Band sang a couple of songs to kick the conference off. Participants were a bit groggy in the morning, as the coffee was late in arriving, but the workshops and the corridors of the meeting hall were packed.

The June 25 sessions focused on historical themes, while Sunday sessions focused on current organizing. GST Buss opened the proceedings, and solidarity greetings were received from the Swedish Workers Central (SAC), the French National Confederation of Labor (CNT-F), and the U.S. Workers Solidarity Alliance.

In the first round of workshops, folk singers Charlie King and Len Wallace performed their "Dump the Bosses off Your Back: A history of the IWW through song," which combines music, readings and slides to tell the story of the IWW organized around the verses of Solidarity Forever. In another room, Norm Diamond, former president of the Pacific Northwest Labor College, led a discussion titled "Militancy isn't enough" which challenged organizers to reflect on organizing models that contribute to real social transformation.

Labor historian Peter Cole and the Rev. Finley Campbell led a session on "Interracial organizing and the IWW." Campbell's piece was a dramatic reading of "letters" that evoked the IWW Brotherhood of Timber Workers' effort to organize in the deep south, while Peter Cole spoke about IWW efforts to organize dock workers. Cole noted that Article I Section 1 of the IWW's first constitution, adopted in 1905, proclaimed the union's commitment to racial and ethnic equality. In Philadelphia, the IWW built what Cole described as "the best example of inter-racial unionism that has ever existed in the United States," winning control of the hiring process, an end to racial segregation, and wage equalization. The IWW controlled the Philadelphia waterfront from 1913 until job control was shattered in a 1922 lock-out. Employers soon recognized the I.L.A. in order to keep the IWW out of the port; reinstating segregated work gangs and the shape-up with its cooperation. Madison Wobs provided lunch on Saturday, and coffee the next morning.

continued on page 6

Labor Ready, U.S. Army: Partners in Exploitation

The June 25 Tacoma, Washington, *News Tribune* reports that a new partnership between temp agency Labor Ready and the U.S. Army National Guard will channel Guard members to Labor Ready's low-wage jobs and temp workers to the National Guard. "We have an employee base that fits the demographics that they recruit from," said Stacey Burke, Labor Ready's spokeswoman.

The National Guard will post jobs available through Labor Ready at its armories across the country. National Guard recruiters will also regularly visit the 700 Labor Ready branches to talk with temporary workers about joining the Guard and post information about the Guard in Labor Ready offices.

For the Army National Guard, the temporary employees represent another source of potential recruits at a time when recruiting is much more difficult because of the U.S. occupation of Iraq and "war on terror." It seems potential soldiers find military promises of college tuition aid or a few bucks for a few weekends a year less appealing when faced with the reality of long deployments, becoming part of the latest capitalist slaughterfest, and possibly returning home in a body bag.

In addition, many Guard members lose their jobs after they get called up. When they return home, they often have trouble finding new jobs, in part because of the weak job market but also because bosses are reluctant to hire workers who might be called back to war at any time.

This new partnership in effect supplies hungry workers to ill-paid military "jobs" while delivering employers a flexible workforce to be exploited.

Fellow Workers, Unite; Ignore the little parasites!

Who am I talking about? A group of confused wage slaves and and students who spout off a lot of vulgarised Leninist nonsense (and we're not even talking vulgarisations of Marx) under the name of various revolutionary vanguards.



I was amused at the debate between the fellow IWWs there and the members of the *Workers Vanguard* / Spartacist League self-proclaimed leadership (the Sparts are the most Stalinist of self-labelled Trots) at the recent 100th anniversary procceedings in Chicago.

What I have observed through my own decades of listening to the pithiless and pitiless evocations of vanguards is that they thrive on leaching off other organisations. They try and suck the lifeblood out of others, attempting to confuse and disempower any other group that shows signs of life.

What do you do when a flea bites? You feel like scratching it, don't you? Facts are, you shouldn't. Sure, it will irritate for a while, but ignore it and the itch goes away much faster.

Or you could just surround them and use some new tactics. The old IWWs used to drown out sky pilots by singing "The Preacher and the Slave." Why not some Wobs surrounding their table, taking out the good old *Little Red Songbook* and singing "The Internationale"? If the Sparts don't stand to attention, tell 'em they're discourteous.

Chances are they won't even know the words, whereupon you can turn the scales and chastise them for lack of class consciousness and political ignorance! Then, when they are most vulnerable, you can pester them to buy a copy of the *Little Red Songbook*.

For the cause that never dies,
Len Wallace

British miners

Thanks to Pete Moore for his thoughtful review of my work, *Strike: Not The End Of The Story*. He makes a couple of mistakes in his piece though. The successful strikes of the 1970s were against Tory governments, the last one in '74 bringing down the government of Ted Heath. Pete somehow concludes these were Labour governments, although it is hard enough for British workers to tell the difference, I admit.

The exhibition was about all the national strikes of the miners since the 1840s not just the '84/5 strike and was an attempt to put that strike in the context of ongoing class struggle in Britain. It is within that context that I end the work with the view "perhaps it is too early to tell yet." I am not talking about the fate of mining, but of the conclusions of the former pit communities and this generation of miners' kids growing up in abandoned communities.

The book by the way, is still available from the National Coal Mining Museum for England, Caphouse Colliery, Wakefield. The museum itself is well worth a visit.

David Douglass

United Airlines: An assault on the entire working class

United Airlines has been in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for two and a half years, the chief purpose of which is to provide a legal cover to drive down the standards of living of UA workers and retirees. (The U.S. pension fund agency will pick up about two-thirds of the pensions, but is itself insolvent.) This has been an enormous success for the UA capitalists and the entire U.S. ruling class. Conversely, this is a gigantic loss for workers at United and the entire U.S. working class.

Driving down the standard of living of workers at United and the entire working class has been going on for at least 25 years, which we can formally date as 1980 when President Reagan fired all the air traffic controllers (PATCO) and brought in scabs to replace them. Then there was the extremely bitter defeat of Local P-9 workers in 1985-86 in Austin, Minn., against Hormel, which the pro-capitalist head of the "parent" UFCW union orchestrated, with the AFL-CIO implicitly supporting his criminal betrayal. P-9's class struggle rallied masses of workers throughout the country against the downward spiral of living being imposed by the capitalists. (When I was working for United in 1990, as a computer instructor, the company imposed a 10 percent cut on all office workers.)

What was the AFL-CIO's response to this U.S. government assault on PATCO and all workers? Did they denounce this criminal act and organize a general strike? Of course not. The AFL-CIO did *nothing*. Why? Because the AFL-CIO as an organization was fulfilling its role as a junior partner of the U.S. capitalists in harnessing the potential, natural militancy of workers everywhere.

But back to the current situation. The leadership of the unions at United – the machinists and mechanics, the flight attendants, the pilots, and likely most of the rank and file – are caught up in the legalistic trap of relying on the capitalist court system, which always protects the class interests of the capitalist ruling class. Thus, there have been no wildcat strikes or other industrial action. Of course, the AFL-CIO has not stepped in on behalf of the United workers (and the entire working class) and called a general strike to put the working class on the offensive. You already know why.

The general strike is the short-term solution to the critical situation at United.

Regarding the long-term solution to the crisis situation for workers at United, as a big part of the continuing downward spiral of living of all workers, the solution is the real socialist revolution by the vast majority of the workers of the world. Otherwise, us workers can only "look forward" to the downward spiral in our standard of living, the "Greatest" capitalist depression, and more capitalist wars for profit and plunder (like the war in Iraq for oil, cheap labor, and military bases).

Perry Sanders, Denver

Correction: PEMEX

Hopefully, if it's not too late, I can correct an error in my article (Mexican teachers fight neoliberalism, p. 12): PEMEX has not yet been privatized, it's just that all signs indicate the government plans to do this really soon by running the company into the ground financially.

Paul Bocking

Farewell, Fellow Worker
Tristan Egolf, 1972-2005

FW Tristan Egolf died May 7. Tristan was a recent member of the Lancaster GMB who was best known as a member of the Smoketown Six, a group of activists arrested when they tried to recreate the infamous Abu-Ghraib prisoner pyramid during Bush's visit to Pennsylvania in July 2004.

Tristan's commitment to social justice went beyond any single issue. As well as opposing the Iraq War, he was a tireless fighter against the Patriot Act and the policies of naked greed which sought to destroy everything from social security to education.

His passion was writing, and he published three books. Tristan left behind a loving fiancé and his 2-year-old daughter, Orla. Many aspects of his passing are not understood; the immense loss to the community is not one of them. He will be greatly missed.

A trust fund has been set up for his daughter. Donations may be sent to: Orla Dimitris-Egolf Fund, c/o Fulton Bank, 1 Penn Square, Lancaster PA 17602.

Industrial Worker
The Voice of Revolutionary Industrial Unionism

★ ORGANIZATION
★ EDUCATION
★ EMANCIPATION

Official newspaper of the **Industrial Workers of the World**
Post Office Box 13476
Philadelphia PA 19101 USA
215.222.1905 • ghq@iww.org
www.iww.org

General Secretary-Treasurer: Alexis Buss

General Executive Board: Mark Damron (chair), Jim Crutchfield, Joshua Freeze, Heather Hall, Samara Paysee, Adam Welch, E. Wolfson

Editor: Jon Bekken iw@iww.org
Intern: David Coccagna

ISSN 0019-8870 Periodicals postage paid Philadelphia PA.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: Industrial Worker, POB 13476, Phila. PA 19101 USA

Individual Subscriptions: $15
Library Subs: $20/year
(Member sub included in dues)

Published eleven times per year

Articles not so designated do not reflect the official position of the IWW. Contributions welcome.

Press Date: July 11, 2005

IWW directory

Australia

IWW Regional Organising Committee
PO Box 241, Surry Hills NSW 2010. phone: 0408 219663. email: roc@iww.org.au www.iww.org.au

British Isles

IWW Regional Organising Committee: PO Box 74, Brighton, E. Sussex, BN1 4ZQ, U.K., www.iww.org.uk, www.brightoniww.org.uk, email: brightoniww@yahoo.co.uk

Scotland: Clydeside GMB, iwwclydeside@mahost.org; web: iwwclydeside.mahost.org. Edinburgh: Eddie Murray, c/o ACE, 17 W. Montgomery Place, EH7 5HA, edinburghiww@yahoo.co.uk

Canada

Alberta

Edmonton GMB: PO Box 75175, T6E 6K1. email: edmonton@lists.iww.org http://edmonton.iww.ca

British Columbia

Vancouver IWW: PO Box 4755, Stn. Terminal, V6B 4A4. 604-682-3269 x8493. email: gmbvan@iww.ca http://vancouver.iww.ca

Manitoba

Winnipeg GMB: IWW, c/o WORC, PO Box 1, R3C 2G1. winnipegiww@hotmail.com. Garth Hardy, del., garth.hardy@union.org.za.

Ontario

Ottawa-Outaouais GMB: PO Box 52015, Ottawa K1N 7E7, (613) 241-0382. ott-out@iww.org French-language del: Mathieu Brûle parti_hardcore@yahoo.com

Peterborough IWW: c/o PCAP, 393 Water St. Unit 17, K9H 3L7. email: ptboiww@riseup.net

Germany

IWW Kontakts: Daniel Zimmermann, Kreuzstraße 17, D-47 226 Duisburg, wobbly@gmx.de; Norbert, iww-germany@gmx.net, http://de.groups.yahoo.com/group/IWW-Germany

Japan

Hokkaido: Braden Cannon, delegate, emak_bakia@hotmail.com

United States

Arizona

Phoenix GMB: 1205 E. Hubbell St., 85006-1758. 602-254-4057. Aaron Rothenburger, del., 480-303-9580.

Arkansas

Fayetteville: PO Box 283, 72702. 479-200-1859, nwar_iww@hotmail.com.

California

Los Angeles GMB: PO Box 91691, Pasadena 91109. 323-682-4143. lagmb@iww.org

San Francisco Bay Area GMB: (Curbside and Buyback IU 670 Recycling Shops; Stonemountain IU 660 Job Shop) PO Box 11412, Berkeley 94712. 415-863-WOBS. Meetings 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 7 p.m. (2022 Blake St., Berkeley)

San Jose: Adam Welch, del. 408-795-9672. email: adam_freedom@yahoo.com

Santa Barbara GMB: PO Box 23008, 93121. 805-689-3086, sbgmb@iww.org

Stockton Rail Truckers IU 530: c/o San Francisco Bay GMB.

Colorado

Denver GMB: c/o P&L Printing Job Shop: 2298 Clay, Denver 80211. 303-433-1852.

Four Corners (AZ, CO, NM, UT): delegate: 970-903-8721. 4corners@iww.org

Florida

Pensacola GMB: PO Box 12311, 32591-2311. Delegates: Steve Winfrey or Scott Satterwhite. www.angelfire.com/fl5/iww. iwwpensacola@yahoo.com

Hobe Sound: Peter Shultz, 8274 SE Pine Circle, 33455-6608, 772-545-9591, okiedogg2002@yahoo.com

Hawai'i

Honolulu: Tony Donnes, del., 808-547-2042. donnes@hawaii.edu

Illinois

Chicago GMB & General Defense Committee Local 3: PO Box 18387, 3750 N. Kedzie, 60618. phone/fax: 815-550-2018.

Carbondale: Jason Leonard, Southern Illinois delegate. chachieldiablo@hotmail.com.

Champaign: David Johnson, 217-356-8247.

Waukegan IWW: PO Box 507, 60079. waukeganiww@iww.org

Kansas

Lawrence GMB: 300 W 14th St., 66044. 785-865-1374. lawrenceiww@hotmail.com.

Maine

Norumbega GMB: Barry Rodrigue, del., 75 Russell St., Bath 04530.

Maryland

Baltimore IWW: c/o Red Emma's, 800 St. Paul St., 21202, 410-230-0450, iww@redemmas.org.

Massachusetts

Boston Area GMB: PO Box 391724, Cambridge 02139. 617-469-5162.

Western Mass. Public Service Workers IU 650 Branch: IWW, PO Box 1581, Northampton 01061.

Western Massachusetts GMB: 43 Taylor Hill Rd., Montague 01351. 413-367-9356.

Michigan

Detroit GMB: 8916 Royce Drive, Sterling Heights 48313. eljoyce@hotmail.com

Grand Rapids GMB: PO Box 6629, 49516. Matthew Clark, 616-459-8090. griww@iww.org

Central Michigan: David Finet, 5007 W. Columbia Rd., Mason 48854. 517-676-9446, happyhippie66@hotmail.com

Minnesota

Duluth GMB: c/o Laverne Capan, 1522 N 8th Ave E, 55805-1115. 218-724-2647.

Missouri

Kansas City GMB: c/o 5506 Holmes St., 64110. sherrimichelle@hotmail.com. 816-523-3995.

Montana

Construction Workers IU 330: Dennis Georg, del. 406-490-3869, trampiu330@aol.com

New Jersey

Central New Jersey GMB: PO Box: 3107, New Brunswick 08903. Delegates: Ted Nebus, newbrunsnj@iww.org; Tom Howard, x356012@gmail.com

New Mexico

Albuquerque: PO Box 4352, 87196. 505-268-1571 abq@iww.org

New York

NYC GMB: PO Box 7430, JAF Station, New York City 10116, iww-nyc@bari.iww.org. Jim Crutchfield, I.U. 650, G.E.B. member, classify@iww.org.

Upstate NY GMB: PO Box 74, Altamont 12009. 518-861-5627, therev@capital.net. Rochelle Semel, del, PO Box 172, Fly Creek 13337, 607-293-6489, rochelle7@usadatanet.net.

Ohio

Ohio Valley GMB: Mark Damron, del., PO Box 42233, Cincinnati 45242.

Ohio River Valley IU 660: PO Box 317741, Cincinnati 45231, iu660cincy@hotmail.com. Steve Succop, del., ssuccop@netscape.net.

Oklahoma

Tulsa: Karl Howeth, 6189 W. 11th Place, 74127. 918-282-7348. vaneigem25@hotmail.com

Oregon

Portland Industrial District Council: (Restaurant Workers IU640, Public Service Workers IU650) **Union Hall:** 616 E. Burnside St., 97214, 503-231-5488. **IU 650 Secretary:** Lupin, 503-209-4679, lupin@inkemail.com.

Pennsylvania

Lancaster GMB: PO Box 796, 17608

Philadelphia GMB: PO Box 42777, 19101. 215-222-1905. phillyiww@iww.org Union Hall: 4530 Baltimore Ave., 19143. South Street Workers Union /Workers Rights Hotline 215-990-8250.

Paper Crane Press IU 450 Job Shop: papercranepress@verizon.net, 610-358-9496.

Pittsburgh GMB: 139 Rossmore St., East Pittsburgh 15112. pittsburghiww@yahoo.com

Texas

Austin GMB: PO Box 650011, 78765. 512-468-5927 waterloowob@monkeywrenchbooks.org

Utah

Salt Lake City GMB: PO Box 520835, 84152-0835. slcgmb@iww.org 801-485-1969.

Washington

Industrial Transportation Project: Arthur J Miller, PO Box 5464, Tacoma 98415-0464.

Olympia GMB: PO Box 2775, 98507. 360-956-9256. olywobs@riseup.net

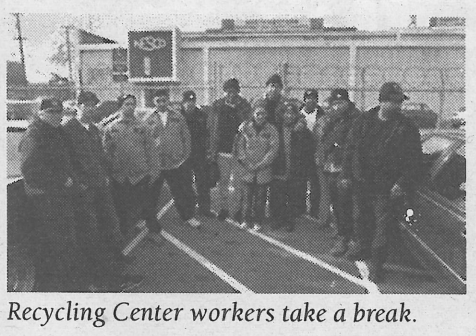
Seattle GMB: 1122 E. Pike #1142, 98122-3934. 877-815-5684, seattle@iww.org, www.seattleiww.org. John Persak, General Distribution IU660: bp172@scn.org.

Spokane: Tim Hill, 509-218-9622.

Wisconsin

Madison GMB: PO Box 2442, 53703-2442. **Lakeside Press IU 450 Job Shop:** 1334 Williamson, Madison 53703. 608-255-1800. **Madison Infoshop Job Shop**: 1019 Williamson St. #B, 53703. 608-262-9036. **Two Degrees Coffeeshop** (IU 660): 307 W. Johnson St., 53703. 608-257-7888. **General Defense Committee Local #4:** P.O. Box 811, 53701. 608-262-9036. **Railroad Workers IU 520:** Ron Kaminkow, PO Box 3010, Madison 53704, 608-358-5771. ronkaminkow@yahoo.com.

Milwaukee GMB: PO Box 070632, 53207. 414-481-3557.



Recycling Center workers take a break.

Berkeley recycling workers unite to win their demands

BY MARIA VALENCIA, IU 670

On June 14, Berkeley Recycling Center (Community Conservation Center) workers, members of IU 670 Industrial Workers of the World, met at their workplace to demand better benefits and salaries. This involved a work stoppage between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m.

Worker Asucena Castrejon says that her wages are not enough to pay rent, babysitter and other bills. Jose Alvarez has to share his house with a relative to pay the rent.

These are only a few examples among many. And that it is why the hard-working union members of Berkeley Recycling Center are not going to lower their guard. And if it is to be possible to get what we demand, we are capable of going on strike, if they do not listen to us and arrive at an agreement.

Recyclers demand justice

BY MARC TORNEY, IU 670

At 1:45 p.m., the recycling yard at Community Conservation Centers, better known as Buyback, grew suddenly silent. The paper line stopped, followed by glass and plastic. The forklifts and trucks pulled into parking spaces, and the roar of their engines died.

The workers gathered in the parking lot in front of the office, donning IWW pins and hats. They chanted ¡Sí se puede! and filed into General Manager Jeff Belchamber's office.

Shop steward Randy Addison read the workers' list of demands: a pay raise, an end to a job classification system that keeps some workers making far less than their fellow workers, more paid holidays (an issue that resulted in a wildcat strike on MLK Day this year), an end to the co-payment workers pay to see a doctor, more vacation time, and more opportunity for training and advancement.

As Randy handed Belchambers a petition signed by every single worker, the boss argued that the workers were paid enough. Wobblies gave him a standing ovation. Unfortunately, the ovation made it impossible to hear what the boss had to say.

The workers filed out of the office and held another meeting in the parking lot before going back to work. Shortly afterwards, contract negotiations began.

Negotiations are also underway for a new contract for workers in the curbside pick-up operation. Workers welcomed their new operations manager July 1 with a meeting where Fellow Workers Todd Miller and Dominic Moschella outlined their complaints.

Dominic handed over a maintenance sheet on every Curbside truck, filled out by the workers. Many trucks have missing mirrors, broken turn signals and bad rear view cameras. They are so old that they break down frequently, forcing workers to complete their routes with fewer trucks. "If there were an inspection, most of those trucks wouldn't even leave the lot," Todd told the boss.

The workers told the boss they wouldn't tolerate managers driving routes. "Those are union jobs," Todd said, "and management should not be doing union work."

Two temporary drivers decided to join the IWW and the IWW negotiated to hire them on a term basis, bringing them under the contract protections.

Austin, Texas, grocer settles

FW Nellie Moore accepted a settlement offer from Fresh Plus Grocery a few days before the NLRB officially issued a complaint. The offer was for $1,600 in back pay and a posting affirming the rights of workers to organize and acknowledging the settlement. The posting will be displayed for 60 days.

Starbucks fires worker for organizing

BY DIANE KRAUTHAMER, INDYMEDIA

The first line of Starbucks Coffee Company's mission statement is to "provide a great work environment and treat each other with respect and dignity." Recently fired Starbucks barista Sarah Bender found out the hard way that looks can be deceiving; she was fired in May for attempting to improve the work environment.

On June 18, over 50 unionists and community members picketed outside of the Starbucks on 17th Street and 1st Avenue in New York City to protest Bender's firing in a cry to "Get an Organizer Her Damn Job Back!"

For three hours demonstrators rallied, drawing the attention of workers inside, passers-by and six NYPD officers. After the picket, many continued to protest at the 9th Street and 2nd Avenue Starbucks, where workers recently declared their unionizing efforts to management.

On May 24, Bender was fired for allegedly mishandling six dollars; although she believes that store manager Noura Glenn fired her for "bothering people about the union." A co-worker overheard Glenn discussing her plans to fire Bender for union activity just one week prior to her termination.

Starbucks first found out about Bender's union activity in November 2004, and subsequently began interrogating her co-workers and writing her up for violations. In the following months, "They reduced my schedule to 15 hours a week and I was prohibited from covering shifts at other stores," Bender said. (Starbucks workers typically fill in for empty shifts at nearby outlets.)

"I felt as if Noura [Glenn] was pressuring me to quit. They made my job a living hell," she added.

Union organizing began in May 2004 at Starbucks locations throughout New York City, when baristas joined the IWW in order to demand a living wage, consistent and guaranteed scheduling, and an end to understaffing.

Currently New York City Starbucks barista wages begin at $8.25 per hour, which puts most below the poverty line. Scheduling, according to one worker who wished to remain anonymous, calling himself the "Battling Barista," is one of the biggest issues where he works. While the workers want flexible hours, he said, they are instead given arbitrary schedules.

Another NYC barista, Jen, said she has had consistent scheduling problems since she started working at Starbucks a few years ago. She typically opens the store, meaning that she has to be there at 5 AM everyday. As a young female commuting from a not-so-safe area, she has safety concerns about 4 a.m. commuting, which she has voiced to her manager many times. She said her manager has yet to give her a shift change.

Starbucks responded to the union campaign with an anti-union campaign that has already resulted in multiple Unfair Labor Practice charges by the National Labor Relations Board. In January 2005, the NLRB issued a complaint alleging that Starbucks was "interfering with, restraining, and coercing employees in the exercise of the rights guaranteed [by federal labor law]."

Starbucks Workers Union organizers Daniel Gross and Bender say one thing the company is great at doing is maintaining a positive public image. "[Starbucks] Chairman Howard Schultz and the company have deceived the American people into believing that Starbucks is a good place to work," Gross said.

"The truth is that because of [their] understaffing and reckless disregard for safe, ergonomic conditions, repetitive stress injuries are epidemic at the company. Workers aren't paid a living wage," he added.

Barista Peter Montalbano, of the 9th Street and 2nd Avenue Starbucks, said management found out about union activity at their store after a non-union worker was "fired unjustly over a scheduling nightmare." Following the worker's termination, he said, people took direct action to protest, such as having customers bombard the store with phone calls, emails and paying in pennies.

Sarah Bender was fired later. Once she was fired, Montalbano and five of his co-workers at the 9th and 2nd store made it public that they were part of the Starbucks Workers Union in support of Bender, and to demand their own rights.

"The six of us are going to continue to work on the campaign no matter what happens," Montalbano added.

In light of her termination, Bender said, the campaign against Starbucks' anti-union activity will focus on helping other people learn about organizing in their own stores. They plan to "show workers that you shouldn't be afraid to organize," she said. "It's becoming a social movement."

"The Starbucks Workers Union is asking our friends around the world to envision a different kind of labor movement rooted on the shop floor and in the community. Anti-union retaliation won't be tolerated and will be opposed vigorously," Gross said.

"Starbucks made a major miscalculation when they fired Sarah Bender," Gross said. "Now the company will feel the militant force of the IWW."

Scab union slams IWW

The Christian Labour Association of Canada lashes out against the IWW in a June 30 article posted to the canadianchistianity.com web site. The Edmonton IWW has been fighting a CLAC scheme to import nonunion workers into the Alberta oil fields.

The site says the IWW, "once considered by many unionists to be one of the most significant forces in the labour movement… has launched some vitriolic attacks on the CLAC." CLAC denies it is a company union, instead saying it is committed to pursuing "reconciliation" with the employers.

Preamble to the IWW Constitution

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

Join the IWW Today

The IWW is a union for all workers, a union dedicated to organizing on the job, in our industries and in our communities both to win better conditions today and to build a world without bosses, a world in which production and distribution are organized by workers ourselves to meet the needs of the entire population, not merely a handful of exploiters.

We are the Industrial Workers of the World because we organize industrially – that is to say, we organize all workers on the job into one union, rather than dividing workers by trade, so that we can pool our strength to fight the bosses together.

Since the IWW was founded in 1905, we have recognized the need to build a truly international union movement in order to confront the global power of the bosses and in order to strengthen workers' ability to stand in solidarity with our fellow workers no matter what part of the globe they happen to live on.

We are a union open to all workers, whether or not the IWW happens to have representation rights in your workplace. We organize the worker, not the job, recognizing that unionism is not about government certification or employer recognition but about workers coming together to address our common concerns. Sometimes this means striking or signing a contract. Sometimes it means refusing to work with an unsafe machine or following the bosses' orders so literally that nothing gets done. Sometimes it means agitating around particular issues or grievances in a specific workplace, or across an industry.

Because the IWW is a democratic, member-run union, decisions about what issues to address and what tactics to pursue are made by the workers directly involved.

TO JOIN: Mail this form with a check or money order for initiation and your first month's dues to: IWW, Post Office Box 13476, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

Initiation is the same as one month's dues. Our dues are calculated according to your income. If your monthly income is under $1,000, dues are $6 a month. If your monthly income is between $1,000 - $2,000, dues are $12 a month. If your monthly income is over $2,000 a month, dues are $18 a month.

- ❑ I affirm that I am a worker, and that I am not an employer
- ❑ I agree to abide by the IWW constitution
- ❑ I will study its principles and make myself acquainted with its purposes.



Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Occupation: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Membership includes a subscription to the Industrial Worker.

A mill worker's lament

BY ANDREW LORD, IU 330

I wake up and my ears are still ringing. Smear some peanut butter and jelly across two pieces of wheat bread and wrap it in used foil. I sort through the cans in my refrigerator looking for something non-alcoholic and cold enough to keep my sandwich chilled in my lunchbox. I check my watch and curse as I race to my truck and speed down the road.

I slow down as I approach the mill, consciously hesitating. I round into the clearing in the forest and see it smoldering like a sleeping giant monster as dew turns to mist warmed under the morning sun. My body shudders (a product of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and the visual hallucinations begin. I step out of my truck, and auditory hallucinations follow. The entire structure visibly vibrates as the earth shakes with the pounding of the hydraulic machinery every three seconds. I steady myself on the liquefied ground. I feel motion sickness but try not to think about it, imagining I am on a boat, a kind of floating factory. What is a hallucination becomes my reality.

I put on my coveralls, eye protection and helmet, insert high-decibel ear plugs, and fill my pockets with rubber gloves to wear in an attempt to avoid contact with the deadly petroleum distillates. I check in at the millwright's coffee room; they tell me which machines need to be cleaned, and I load my arms with rags and some degreasers. Another "oil spill" to clean up.

That is what I do, clean up "oil spills." I use quotation marks because "spill" implies an accident, while my work is a full-time job in service to leaking hydraulic lines under 2,000-3,000 pounds of pressure. Over a thousand machines with thousands of lines make leaks and blows a routine part of production and the clean-up a routine part of my daily life.

I no longer believe in accidents, but they happen. The only reason I have the job at all is that out of eight full-time millwrights I am the only one able to climb into and around machines while the mill is operating. I have no special ability other than that I have yet to injure myself on the job like the rest. It is only a matter of time.

The machines are a few feet apart and in most cases several stories tall. A labyrinth of catwalks surrounds each machine, which consumes logs as fast as they can be fed. A fallen section of a tree or "log" comes down the line, passes through the debarker, and is roughly cut into the needed board size. A rough cut board passes through the edger's lasers and the final cuts are made, turning a tree into building material. In less than 30 seconds' time 2,000-year-old redwoods are turned into ornamental lattice or fencing used in backyards and around hot tubs across America. This is the value of life.

I am always aware of the specter of death while on the job: getting whacked by a log moving at speeds in excess of 25 miles per hour or slipping on wet or greasy equipment and getting sucked down the line into the saw blade of a head rig. Mill jobs are mindless, numbing, tedious work instilling and then rendering mundane the fear of dismemberment and death.

Then again, every job is like that. Work is a risky game. Writer Derrick Jenson recently explained at a reading in the nearby hamlet of Westhaven that time is the only thing you really have and selling time is like selling a part of your body to your boss.

You would not consider going for an interview and accepting a job for a piece of your finger or a career in exchange for all the fingers on both hands. However, I agree with Jenson – this is exactly what we do when we exchange our time, our lives, for money. Our life is our time and our time on earth is finite. To make matters worse, most of us hate the work we do. We spend most of our lives at a place we detest the most. Why? For what? In a vain attempt at escaping poverty and taking possession of our bodies, our lives, back. Poverty is a lethal force. We are the walking wounded at Winco discount groceries. We are fucked. We are the working class. Like those living in Iraq, we are injured, strung-out civilian combatants. We are being bombed with low-quality toxic consumer goods.

The mill bathrooms have no mirrors. At first I assumed this was a result of vandalism, but then why not use shiny steel? When I come home after a day at the mill, I am always amazed to see how my face is covered in oil and sawdust. We are all covered in oil and sawdust, and like I said I no longer believe in accidents. I think the company doesn't want its workers to see themselves covered in toxins and looking older every time they take a piss, and so no mirrors in the bathrooms for us.

Poverty is often a subtle, persistent kind of violence, but it is violence nonetheless. We are like frogs in a pot of warming water soon to turn to a rolling boil. Trapped, trapped in a cycle that all one wants is to break free of. We are prisoners in our poverty. Poverty is a prison. Fight on Fellow Workers.

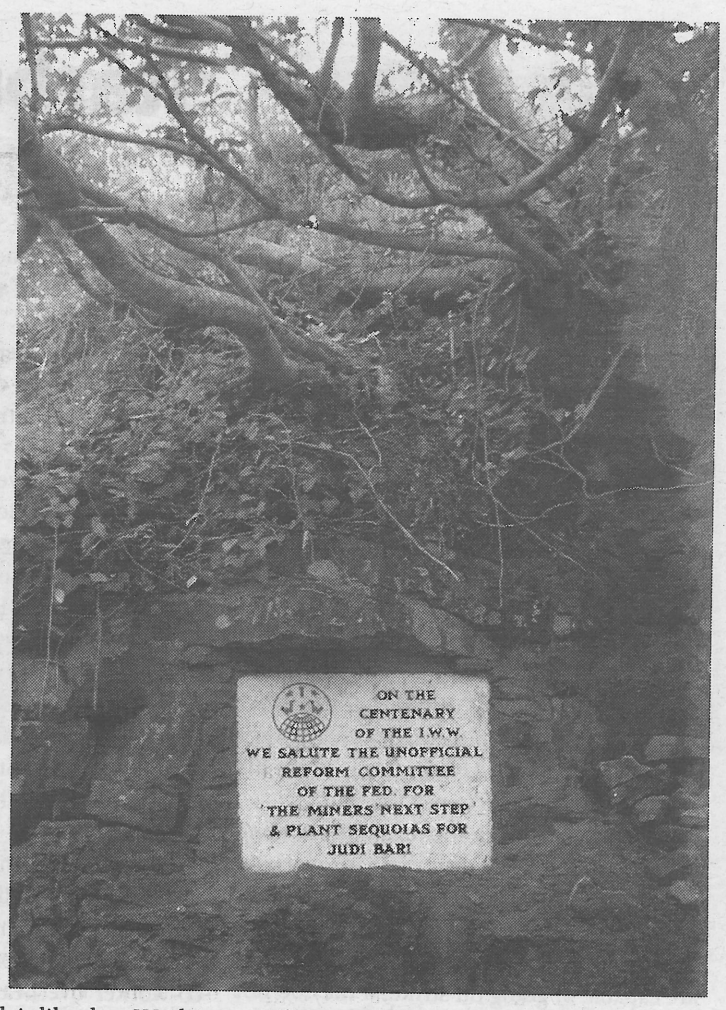
Happy 100th birthday to the IWW.

Wobbly monument in Wales

On July 2, a small group of British Wobblies and friends planted trees in memory of IWW organizer Judi Bari (bombed by the capitalists) and placed a marble tablet in a rocky mound in a 40-acre public forest in Pembrey, Wales.

The inscription reads: "On the Centenary of the IWW. We salute the Unofficial Reform Committee of the Fed for 'The Miners' Next Step' & plant Sequoias for Judi Bari."

The Miners' Next Step was a rank-and-file 1912 proposal to revitalize the miners' union through more militant tactics.



Every six minutes

BY ERIC LEE

When LabourStart began back in 1998, news was one of its three main features (the others were a directory of union web sites and links to online campaigns run by unions). One of the three columns on the web site consisted of the day's labour news – all five or six items. I remember well a discussion I had with a colleague that year who told me that in the future we should probably stick with that format – five or six news stories a day was more than enough.

Fast forward to 2005: We've just had to completely re-vamp LabourStart's front page because the number of news stories appearing in English on the average day had become so large as to require endless scrolling. If you were looking for news from the USA or the UK, you'd have to scroll through pages and pages of news from all the other countries, listed in alphabetical order.

In the month of June 2005, our 340 volunteer correspondents published no fewer than 7,300 links to labour news stories – an average of 243 news stories per day, every day. Let's put that another way: on average, every six minutes we link to another labour news story.

Not all those stories were in English. We're running news in around 20 languages these days. But the bulk of those were stories in English.

Some of those stories are purely local, of course. A report on a picket line at a Chicago hotel. A woman fined for driving into a picket line in Canada. A seminar of interest to trade unionists in Sydney.

But many were of global significance – big news stories by any standard. These included hundreds of thousands of workers taking to the streets in one of the largest protest movements Australia has ever seen. General strikes in South Africa and Greece. In the USA, a possible split in the AFL-CIO. And in Israel, the militant leader of the country's unions running as a candidate for prime minister.

With labour news breaking every six minutes, you'd think that daily newspapers, radio stations and television would be absolutely overflowing with union news. But of course that is not the case. You can read through many major daily newspapers



in the USA and elsewhere and never find a single news story that relates in any way to a union. You can watch hours of 24-hour news channels such as Fox or CNN (not that you'd want to!) and never hear the word "union" mentioned.

It's a funny situation when LabourStart is flooded with thousands of union news stories every month, but in the mass media there's a drought. Of the 7,300 labour news stories we ran in June 2005, I'll bet that at most a handful appeared in any of the mainstream media you've read.

But it's not only the mainstream media which are the problem. Which union publication can cover any of those 7,300 stories in real time? There are no labour daily papers in the USA (and very few anywhere else), and most unions would consider themselves lucky to publish a monthly magazine. Newspapers like *Industrial Worker,* which do make an effort to publish general labour news, find that at best there'll be room for a dozen or two labour news stories – and these will appear days or weeks after the event.

All of this leads me to three observations about labour news and the labour movement:

1. The only way to get labour news out to union members in real time is through the web. Print publications and even other electronic media (radio and television) cannot keep up with the pace.

2. Labor news is global news. National borders mean less and less in a globalized economy.

3. The mainstream media isn't going to do the job for us. Unions need their own media.

The next time you sit down to watch the news on television, or skim through the morning newspaper, pay attention to how much (or how little) labour news you're seeing or reading. And then remember that every six minutes, another labour news story breaks somewhere in the world.

Appearance-based discrimination

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has rejected a lawsuit by Darlene Jespersen, a female casino bartender who sued Harrah's Entertainment after being fired for refusing to wear makeup. Jespersen was fired after 21 years with Harrah's. The courts ruled the firing was legal because the casino also required male employees to be groomed in accordance with Harrah's Hotel Beverage Department Image Transformation Program.

Harrah's policy requires servers to be "well-groomed, appealing to the eye, be firm and body toned, and be comfortable with maintaining this look while wearing the specified uniform." Female workers are required to wear nail polish, stockings and have hair "teased, curled or styled every day you work."

Among those likely to be harmed by the ruling are two female drink servers, Trisha Hart and Renee Gaud, who worked at the Borgata Hotel Casino in Atlantic City. Earlier in 2005, the casino required its "Borgata babes" to submit to unannounced random weight checks and conform to new uniform weight standards. Borgata officials maintain the 'babes' are important to their brand.

When waitresses complained that the policy was humiliating, Local 54 of UNITE HERE filed discrimination charges with the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights.

Hart, 28, was fired after complaining about the policy. Gaud, 35, gained weight because of hypothyroidism. When she asked for a bigger dress she was told that Borgata Babes don't go up in size.

Under Borgata's new policy, employees were weighed in February to establish a baseline weight; and new employees are weighed when hired. Those who gain more than 7 percent of their body weight will be put on a 90-day leave. Borgata will offer a personal trainer and nutritionist, but if servers can't lose the weight, they get fired. Pregnant servers get the 90 days to get back in shape after their maternity leave.

Appearance discrimination issues could have far-reaching effects upon what so-called professional business standards female workers can be compelled to meet.

Attorneys representing one of the Borgata employees in New Jersey Superior Court said the Borgata policy targets women in arbitrary and humiliating ways. For many reasons, women gain weight and it can be more difficult for them to lose it than men. Appearance-based discrimination is widespread. In April 2005, a judge ruled against the Abercrombie & Fitch retail chain for discriminatory employment practices involving appearance.

Farewell, Fellow Worker Mary Frohman, 1947-2005

Former General Secretary-Treasurer Mary Frohman died June 3 of a heart attack while waiting for a bus in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Frohman first came into contact with the IWW in 1968, as one of many student activists disgusted with the authoritarian tendencies battling it out for control of SDS. She soon joined the IWW, working at general headquarters for a couple of stints, and serving as GST in 1982. Her politics (like her life) were eclectic, but she gave her all to the struggle for human emancipation.

Making G8 history

BY OLIVE BOUFFON

Leaders of the world's richest nations – Britain, Japan, the United States, Canada, Germany, France, Italy and Russia – met in Gleneagles, Scotland, July 6 - 8, ostensibly to discuss ways to help the world's poor.

Communities in Scotland began their organizing early on. The Make Poverty History movement brought together religious groups, unions and NGOs such as OXFAM for a massive July 2 rally, which the Blair government sought to utilize to promote an image of progressive kindness. Alternative G8 summit plans were also made by the World Development Movement and Global Resistance. The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination's "living theatre" project toured through England and Scotland training protesters in civil disobedience. Throughout the week of street protests against the G8 summit, the Laboratory and the Clown Army highlighted the hypocrisy of the neo-liberal agenda proposed by the Blair government.

The tour entered towns late in the day, setting up a makeshift stage where activist actors told stories about the joys of resistance. For example, a vacuum cleaner puppet would introduce a lecture by a farcical doctor who explained how he learned to stop buying CDs and began using free downloads, or how and why he's been active in civil disobedience. After that, clowns and tumblers burst onto the scene, introducing members of the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army.

Caravan clowns invited others to become part of the training for civil disobedience tour, creating a "toolbox of creative resistance." The clown troupe described anti-capitalist street actions and performances which could be used to portray issues of consumerism and militarism, while the Laboratory conducted workshops that included interventionist performance, disruptive buffoonery, guerilla gardening, and culture jamming.

On the train from London, loaded with travelers to the July 1 Make Poverty History march in Edinburgh, people chanted, "We don't want charity, we want social justice." Before the start of the official march, residents of Craigmillar, the most deprived area of Edinburgh, joined with anti-G8 protestors camping on a park in their estate. They marched through the estate to show their opposition to poverty here and abroad.

Labor organizations, multitudes of anti-globalization and anti-war activists, the Clown Brigade, the Infernal Noise Brigade, and samba bands joined 200,000 demonstrators participating in the Make Poverty History march. The demonstration did not take shape as organisers intended, however. Though MPH organisers asked protesters to wear white, thousands of multi-coloured outfits appeared on the streets, with messages such as "Make the G8 history." Others wore red armbands that said "Make capitalism history." In defiance of the media spin, protesters pointed to the G8 leaders as the source of problems, warning not to expect miracles from the likes of Bush and Blair.



March organisers, as well as the media and police, spent a lot of time trying to suppress any message that might criticize the government. Blair's New Labour government went to a lot of trouble to utilise friends in labor and non-governmental organisations to hide the agenda spelled out in the Commission for Africa Report. Somehow the media did not report the sacrifices that impoverished countries were being asked to make.

At the MPH demonstration main stage, anti-globalisation icon Walden Bello, who heads the Bangkok-based NGO Focus on the Global South, used the occasion to decry the war and occupation in Iraq, much to the dismay of MPH organisers who expected the idealistic rant of rock celebrities heard at Live 8 a few days before. Human rights campaigner Bianca Jagger also countered the MPH line. To end poverty, she said, G8 leaders must work to end the global economic system that inevitably creates poverty by using the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO: a direct challenge to New Labour's role in the big three, as well as to the dozens of unannounced deals with international corporations. To cheers and applause, she warned celebrities against being co-opted and used by the eight little men. When she named Tony Blair, the crowd booed and hissed – if Blair cared, she said, he wouldn't be authorizing trade liberalization and privatisation. Then Bianca chanted "trade justice, not trade liberalization."

Chancellor Gordon Brown, famous spokesman for New Labour's charade to save the environment and end poverty, never appeared. And at the end of the Summit, while G8 leaders pledged to increase aid to Africa by US$50 billion (past pledges have gone unfulfilled), there was no progress on the other announced goal of slowing climate change. Governments agreed to write off debts of the 18 poorest countries in Africa, but conditioned this relief upon acceptance of stringent IMF conditions to slash public spending and attract foreign investment.

As the G8 summiteers gathered for their "more of the same" program, 400 protesters were prevented from joining the "welcome walk for the G8" parade by a huge battalion of police, detained for three hours, and searched under Britain's anti-terror laws.

But before MPH organizers could do anything about it, the satirical CRAP society (Capitalism Represents Acceptable Policy) hijacked the very front of the MPH demonstration holding signs: "Bomb Iran Next," "Bring Back the Slave Trade," and "Make Money Not Love." Upon seeing this spectacle, the corporate TV crews and news photographers became agitated, and so did MPH organizers who tried to take signs from the anarchists.

An anti-capitalist bloc broke away from the main march and was cordoned off by riot cops. Others joined the main event and held actions afterwards. Detachments of the Clown Army circulated, while break dancers gathered in Bristol Square in an attempt to "Break Poverty." Actors parodied capitalists and paraded in support of the G8. An impromptu street party ended the march, with samba and music from the Infernal Noise Brigade lasting until midnight.

Despite the political Brown-wash and media spin, serious dissent continued on July 4. The Clown Army along with anti-war activists and church leaders joined in a blockade of Faslane, a Royal Navy submarine base on the Clyde, the largest and deadliest military base in Scotland and home port for all four British Trident nuclear armed submarines (located only 90 km from the Gleneagles summit locale). The significance of this action cannot be underestimated. Hidden in the issues of trade negotiations is the arms market, which the G8 countries richly profit from and employ to manipulate the economies of countries suffering from underdevelopment.

Meanwhile in Edinburgh, protesters danced in the "Carnival of Full Enjoyment." The Carnival organisers' goal was to encourage "workers, migrants, students, benefit claimers, New Dealers, work refusers, pensioners, dreamers, duckers & divers" to resist the "daily grind of the institutions that plunge us into overwork, poverty and debt."

The Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army joined carnival-goers, spending the afternoon attempting to dance and sing throughout the city – eventually forcing traffic and shops to close. The carnival attracted thousands of local onlookers, hundreds of Edinburgh workers and youths.

Police chased clowns (cat and mouse) and moved to repress demonstrations with riot gear, horses, dogs and baton charges. These clashes led to more than 100 arrests, and over 60 injuries. TV reports blamed the dancing protesters, but the truth was depicted in scenes of police charging and clubbing of carnival goers, as was later confirmed by witnesses such as Green MSP Mark Ballard.

On the morning of July 5, protesters on their way to a solidarity demonstration for those arrested looked up from the street at World Development Movement activists who occupied a crane with a banner, "No More [Gordon] Brown Wash." WDM was part of the Alternate G8 Coalition, criticising the government's media spin and organising an alternate G8 summit attended by over 5000.

Outside the Edinburgh Irish Consulate, an anti-Shell oil demonstration protested the international oil conglomerate's plan to turn an area of natural beauty into an onshore oil refinery and ranted against oil corporate involvement in the G8 charade. The abuses of oil companies are of particular concern to Scottish activists who experience the smell from BP oil refineries daily.

At Dungavel Detention Centre, 1000 people demonstrated outside the fences that confine detained immigrants and their families with small children who seek asylum. Activists listened to speeches from ex-detainees who witnessed the abuses of the center and the British immigration system.

On July 6, well before dawn, hundreds of people headed for Gleneagles, where the summit was taking place. In Edinburgh there was an attempt to blockade G8 delegates leaving the Sheraton Grand Hotel to get to the summit. On the M9 motorway 200 protesters occupied the roads, lying down to block traffic.

Despite police announcements that alternative G8 marches were cancelled, protesters endured heavy rain and traffic jams to converge at the summit location. Demonstrators arriving at Gleneagles breached the fences that guard the golf resort where the G8 leaders met. 5000 were able to carry on a cheerful and colorful demonstration marching up to the fences with music despite the police formations and military helicopters overhead.

On July 7, the second day of the G8 summit, after a long day on the streets, 400 people who slept on an open field at the Stirling eco-village awoke to find themselves surrounded by police. People were restricted to the camp all day, effectively halting all movement from the eco-village.

Despite police antics, it became clear that the march would proceed and that the earlier cancellation announcement was merely a police lie to keep the numbers down. 500 demonstrators had been turned back to Edinburgh, where they held demonstrations and vigils. The trains had been stopped from running, meaning that people on site were the only ones available to protest. The march, which had been organised by the Globalize Resistance and some socialist organisations, began with speeches. Carrying banners and placards, protesters moved slowly down the narrow roads of Gleneagles, past steel barricades and rows of riot police and their mounted accomplices. Nothing could be more symbolic of how close these eight "leaders," all of whom profess a passion for democracy, really wanted to be to the people.

Marchers were allowed onto an open field adjoining the hotel where the G8 was meeting. A man dressed in black carrying a black coffin strolled across the field. He was followed by a group of Congolese dressed in white carrying a white coffin; and then by demonstrators carrying a huge Iraqi flag with the words "Make Occupation History." The Infernal Noise Brigade and an American marching band headed to the main fence barrier along with dancing protesters. Sections of the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army joined, and soon there were 400 people scattered across the field.

Clowns climbed a tree on the boundary and covered it with banners. The Infernal Noise Brigade marched in random directions up and down a hill. The atmosphere of frolic changed completely when a military Chinook helicopter circled low overhead. Outraged protesters were confronted by riot police, dispatched from the copters that came swooping in. A long riot police line formed, covering the entire width of the field. More police marched in, followed by a detachment of clowns who skillfully mocked and parodied the police line-up using antics, buffoonery and serious clown faces. In response to the police maneuvers, the marchers sang: "We all live in a terrorist regime."

The GleneaglesG8 summit closed with speeches from Bush and Blair in response to the subway bombings in London. Bush did not sign the Kyoto global warming treaty or make any substantive commitment to address the issue, and Blair gave no indication that anything would change his relationship to big oil corporations or arms markets. The war in Iraq continues.

ILO slams Canada for labor rights violations

An International Labour Organization report slams the Newfoundland and Labrador provincial government for violating the rights of 20,000 public sector workers in April 2004. The ILO condemned back-to-work legislation and unilaterally imposed contracts as violations of international labor standards, and also criticized the contract's lengthy term.

The legislation was aimed at ending a four-week strike which was suspended before the legislation was passed. The government ignored unions' offer to submit the dispute to binding arbitration.

As we go to press a B.C. government mediator is trying to end a five-day strike by more than 1,000 truck drivers handling containers at the Port of Vancouver. The truckers say per-container rates paid by shippers have slipped in recent years, leaving them only C$50 in daily take-home pay after operating expenses such as fuel are paid for.



The IWW centenary...

continued from page 1

In the afternoon, two consecutive sessions addressed the legacy of labor activist/writers Stan Weir and Marty Glaberman in the context of the IWW tradition. As moderator Staughton Lynd pointed out, these workshops shared a common subject: how to relate to our class. Presentations by SEIU rank-and-file activist Andrea Carney, Norm Diamond, *WorkingUSA* editor Immanual Ness, professors George Lipsitz and Peter Linebaugh, and Mumia Abu-Jamal in a recorded presentation outlined the approach. Gifford Hartman also presented a slideshow on the 1946 Oakland General Strike, a pivotal experience for Weir.

Workers, they said, citing Stan Weir and Marty Glaberman, are not to be led, but encouraged. The break with the 20th century left that especially Marty represented (along with C.L.R. James and others) is the rejection not just of the party elite, but any agency that thinks we need to drag the class into a revolutionary posture.

The chief obstacle to modern emancipation is subjective, not objective; workers have the power, we just haven't realized it. Seeing workers as essentially the objects of our organizing efforts – cogs to fit in our wheel, if you will – perpetuates this problem. Instead, we must identify those acts of class rebellion where workers act as the subjects of their lives and history itself and then build on that.

A session on Direct Action was so crowded it had to be relocated to a larger room. After a short presentation on how the overall strategy of direct action differs from the strategy of political action, participants shared their experiences involving direct action at work.

A workshop on international solidarity featured labor historian Wayne Thorpe, who discussed the IWW's interactions with three labor internationals from 1910 to 1939, and Swedish Workers' Center (SAC) activist Sabina Wallner, who discussed the SAC's international solidarity campaigns which have taken on new urgency in the face of European integration and the collapse of the Swedish welfare state. SAC has provided technical and other assistance to emerging syndicalist unions in Bangladesh, Poland and Siberia; helped organize a cross-European strike of transport workers against privatization last year; and has been working closely with the French CNT and the Spanish CGT in solidarity campaigns with undocumented workers, and East European and Palestinian workers' movements.

The SAC is increasingly focused on workplace organizing, Wallner said, and is looking for ways to more closely link its international efforts with workplace struggles. The SAC works in a labor relations context where all unions are entitled to represent their members on each job even where another union has majority status, which creates more room for minority unions but can also lead to tensions with the dominant LO federation, which often scabs on SAC strikes.

Other Saturday sessions addressed the role of immigrant workers in the IWW and the radical movement more generally, and brought together Wobblies who joined the union in the 1960s and 1970s to share stories of the old-timers who built the union, and who they had the opportunity to work with. The day ended with slide-show presentations by IWW archivist William LeFevre and Nicole Schulman, who presented a piece on Frank Little she did as part of the recently published *Wobblies: A Graphic History of the IWW.*



Fanning the flames

Saturday evening, 400 people packed the People's Temple for the "Fan the Flames of Discontent" conference. John Berquist emceed the affair, which packed the stage with Wobbly musicians including Charlie King, the Citizens' Band, Anne Feeney, Larry Long, Rebel Voices, Mark Ross and Len Wallace, along with a brief appearance by special guest U. Utah Phillips. The musicians shared the stage throughout the show, interspersing classic Wobbly anthems with recent songs, often joining forces for a high-energy concert that brought the audience to its feet despite the stifling heat.

Concert-goers received copies of an advance printing of the new 37th edition of the IWW's *Little Red Songbook,* which is currently undergoing proofreading and review by the General Executive Board. Also hot off the presses for the centenary was *Slaughter in Serene: The Columbine Strike Reader,* a collection of four essays examining aspects of the IWW's 1927 Colorado coal strike and the first Columbine Massacre. (Available for $19.05 plus shipping from the IWW or from the Bread & Roses Cultural Center, 2298 Clay St., Denver Co 80211.)

Sunday's sessions began with a presentation by labor lawyer and historian Staughton Lynd (see page 7), in which he noted that the CIO and its brand of "industrial" unionism had proved a cruel disappointment, and that even "labor reformers" lacked any vision for building workers' power on the job, let alone working toward our emancipation.

We then divided into workshops, with Peter Linebaugh exploring the tradition of the commons as an alternative basis for worker organizing. Just as the air today is generally considered a commonly owned "resource" freely available to all (even if the U.S. government now allows companies to buy and sell the "right" to pollute it), so much of the land was once held in common, available to all to meet their subsistence means. Around the world, struggles over access to water and land (and the resources beneath the land) recall earlier struggles to defend the earth as a common treasury for all. These struggles increasingly overlap with the fight against exploitation of wage earners and violations of human rights, and Linebaugh suggested that reuniting these threads could form a basis for a renewed vision of human freedom.

IWW members working to organize Starbucks, Borders Books and Whole Foods workers discussed their efforts in a session titled "Workers in Chains: Organizing in Multi-Outlet Stores." They discussed how they came to reject business unionism (several had horror stories about efforts to organize with the United Food & Commercial Workers), and the ways they are trying to make the union a daily reality on their jobs, through tactics as simple as refusing to pick up the slack when the boss doesn't schedule enough workers to confronting managers in a group over particularly serious grievances. An injured Whole Foods worker discussed his personal resistance to speed-up and unsafe conditions, noting: "The things that I do don't just benefit me; it's for the next person who comes behind me as well." Another discussed an incident where workers in one department cornered their manager to address short-scheduling of a co-worker who had returned after an injury. When the manager said the budget was to blame, they offered to share the shortage – calling the boss's bluff and forcing her to back down. The Whole Foods workers have also developed a tradition of collections to aid injured and fired workers, which has taken on a life of its own in the shop.

A contingent of New York City Starbucks workers discussed their IWW campaign, noting that their efforts had already resulted in a 50 cent raise in starting pay and forced management to admit that there are ergonomics hazards (even if their "solution" is that workers should do special exercises).

The campaign has moved beyond single-shop campaigns to try to develop a presence throughout the chain. However, as the campaign has spread, so has Starbucks' harass-

continued next page

Why is the IWW unique?

This month's column is based on my remarks to the IWW centenary conference.

The IWW was formed by labor leaders and radicals who saw a deep crisis in the labor movement:

Union density was very low, about as low in the private sector as union membership in the U.S. is today.

AFL unions were largely uninterested in organizing vast numbers of workers: the unskilled, women and immigrants, and workers in precarious situations (temporary and migratory jobs, domestic service, etc.).

Unions lacked a broader social vision, instead pushing demobilizing myths of labor-management cooperation, and squandering members' dues money on pro-boss politicians.

Unions treated their agreements with the bosses as sacred obligations (even when they were violated by the companies on a routine basis), yet they scabbed on other unions' struggles by handling struck goods, with each union fighting their battles alone.

Union officials were increasingly separate from their members, rather than returning regularly to the job and the rank and file.

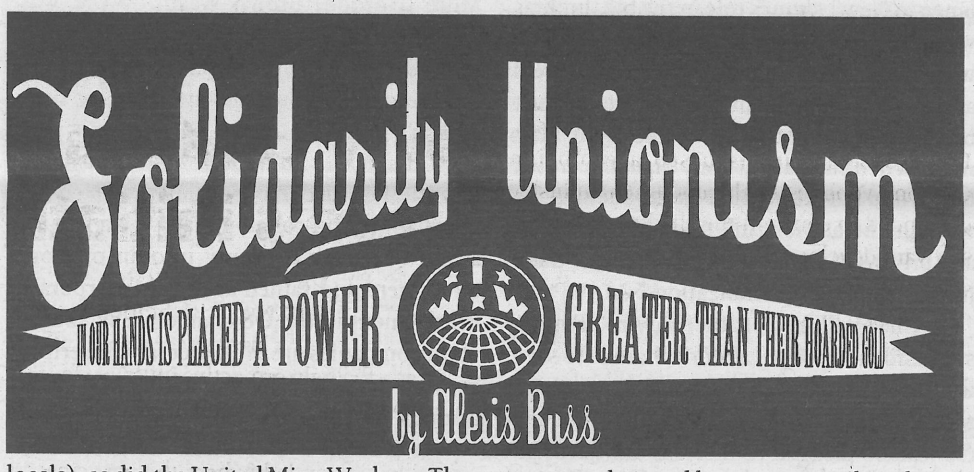
Many workers put in 10- or 12-hour days, decades after the Haymarket Martyrs were hanged for struggling for the shorter work week.

Sound familiar?

The IWW has a reputation for being the first organization to come up with many very good ideas, which perhaps we propagated more than our forbearers and contemporaries, but were not entirely owned by us. Among them:

Industrial Unionism: although our union was largely formed in response to the serious deficiencies in craft unionism, there were industrial unions before us, and some of these unions, including mine workers and brewery workers, were represented at the IWW's founding convention.

Non-Exclusion: While the IWW was known for multi-racial and ethnic organizing, we were not the first to figure out that uniting workers in various communities could make everyone stronger. The Knights of Labor, did it before us (even if sometimes in segregated locals), as did the United Mine Workers. The Knights also organized women, as did some garment unions, though the IWW may have been unique in allowing these workers to run their own unions.



Working-class culture: The IWW's songs, poems, artwork and media are often cited as a unique contribution our union made to the labor movement. But many unions had songs, even if ours have better stood the test of time. Working-class mutual aid societies sponsored workers' choirs and theater societies. Workers have never been the uncultured louts the bosses and head-fixers like to imagine.

What makes the IWW truly unique is that we don't believe that some people were put on earth to be bosses and some people were put on earth to be workers.

Our union, formed a century ago, seeks to build a working class movement attuned to modern conditions, a union that understands where power lies and made up of working people organized to wield our power effectively. The ideals articulated in the IWW's preamble were not simply abstract theory (although many Wobs were better read in social and political theory than today's college students), but a result of the lived experience of labor organizers and wage slaves.

At times it can be difficult to measure the present-day IWW against the larger-than-life image that our union projects. Historians like to talk about the grand struggles of the IWW's heyday: Lawrence, Paterson, the Colorado coal strikes of 1927, to name a few.

I don't want to downplay the importance of these events, but I think it's just as important to understand how our union has always measured our success and power. When you read the columns in the IWW press, they are filled with smaller struggles: winning better food, stopping work after six hours, getting rid of louse-ridden bedrolls, forcing a foreman to treat workers with respect.

Today our union work is once again filled with these "small" battles – with daily struggles over the conditions under which we toil and are exploited. The IWW has always recognized the vital importance of building worker-to-worker solidarity. If the "big" struggles many look for don't have that solidarity as their foundation they can not succeed – and without that solidarity they are not genuine union struggles.

It has been my pleasure to be a part of the IWW, especially these days when we are growing and doing some of the most interesting organizing work our union has seen in decades. I think it is safe to say that our ideas about organizing, and the way many of our campaigns look now, are modern-day extensions of our old traditions.

We are faced with many challenges, especially in these days of globalized capital and war. Today's climate requires that we, the tenacious group of Wobs, do more than torch-carrying. As we fan the flames of discontent through our organizing, we must also challenge ourselves to create new ways of expressing the IWW's vision.

We have much knowledge and inspiration to help guide us from our past, cheers to the Wobblies for today, who will help the Wobblies of tomorrow create the new society within the shell of the old.

Building a new revolutionary labor movement

BY STAUGHTON LYND

This is the text of Lynd's plenary speech. It has been edited slightly for publication.

The greatest honor I have ever received is to be asked to speak to you on the occasion of the IWW's 100th birthday.

But I am not standing here alone. Beside me are departed friends. John Sargent was the first president of Local 1010, United Steelworkers of America, the 18,000-member union at Inland Steel just east of Chicago. John said that he and his fellow workers achieved far more through direct action before they had a collective bargaining agreement than they did after they had a contract. You can read his words in the book *Rank and File*. Ed Mann and John Barbero, after years as rank and filers, became president and vice president of Steelworkers Local 1462 at Youngstown Sheet & Tube, and toward the end of his life Ed joined the IWW.

Ed and John were ex-Marines who opposed the Korean and Vietnam wars; they fought racism both in the mill and in the city of Youngstown, where in the 1950s swimming pools were still segregated; they believed, as do I, that there will be no answer to the problem of plant shutdowns until working people take the means of production into their own hands; and in January 1980, in response to U.S. Steel's decision to close all its Youngstown facilities, Ed led us down the hill from the local union hall to the U.S. Steel administration building, where the forces of good broke down the door and for one glorious afternoon occupied the company headquarters. Ed's daughter changed her baby's diapers on the pool table in the executive game room. Stan Weir and Marty Glaberman, very much alone, moved our thinking forward about informal work groups as the heart of working-class self-organization, about unions with leaders who stay on the shop floor, about alternatives to the hierarchical vanguard party, about overcoming racism and about international solidarity.

These men were in their own generation successors to the Haymarket martyrs and Joe Hill. They represented the inheritance that you and I seek to carry on.

How I learned about the IWW

It all began for me when I was about 14 years old.

Some of you may know the name of Seymour Martin Lipset. He became a rather conservative political sociologist. In the early 1940s, however, he was a graduate student of my father's and a socialist, who wrote his dissertation on the Canadian Commonwealth Federation.

Marty Lipset decided that my political education would not be complete until I had visited the New York City headquarters of the Socialist Party. The office was on the East Side and so we caught the shuttle at Times Square. I have no memory of the Socialist Party headquarters but a story Marty told me on the shuttle changed my life.

It seems that one day during the Spanish Civil War there was a long line of persons waiting for lunch. Far back in the line was a well-known anarchist. A colleague importuned him: "Comrade, come to the front of the line and get your lunch. Your time is too valuable to be wasted this way. Your work is too important for you to stand at the back of the line. Think of the Revolution!" Moving not one inch, the anarchist leader replied: "This is the Revolution."

I think I asked myself, Is there any one in the United States who thinks that way? A few years later, in my parents' living room, I picked up C. Wright Mills' book about the leaders of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, *The New Men of Power.* Mills argued that these men were bureaucrats at the head of hierarchical organizations. At the very beginning of the book, in contrast to all that was to follow, Mills quoted a description of the Wobblies who went to Everett, Washington, on a vessel named the Verona in November 1916 to take part in a free speech fight. As the boat approached the dock in Everett, "Sheriff McRae called out to them: 'Who is your leader?' Immediate and unmistakable was the answer from every I.W.W.: 'We are all leaders.'"

So, I thought to myself, perhaps the Wobblies were the equivalent in the United States of the Spanish anarchists. But here a difficulty held me up for twenty years. If, as the Wobblies seemed to say, the answer to the problems of the old AF of L was industrial unionism, why was it that the new industrial unions of the CIO acted so much like the craft unions of the old AF of L?

If, as the Wobblies seemed to say, the answer to the problems of the old AF of L was industrial unionism, why was it that the new industrial unions of the CIO acted so much like the craft unions of the old AF of L?

Industrial unionism and the right to strike

The Preamble to the IWW Constitution, as of course you know, stated and still states: "The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry..."

Clearly these words, when they were written, referred to a workplace at the turn of the last century where each group of crafts persons belonged to a different union. Each such union had its own collective bargaining agreement, complete with a termination date different from that of every other union at the worksite. The Wobblies called this arrangement "the American Separation of Labor."

The Preamble suggested a solution: "These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its workers in any one industry, or all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one the injury of all."

The answer, in short, appeared to be the reorganization of labor in industrial rather than craft unions.

It seemed to Wobblies and like-minded rank-and-file workers that if only labor were to organize industrially, the "separation of labor" – as the IWW characterized the old AF of L – could be overcome. All kinds of workers in a given workplace would belong to the same union and could take direct action together, as they chose. Hence in the early 1930s Wobblies and former Wobblies threw themselves into the organization of local industrial unions.

A cruel disappointment awaited them. When John L. Lewis, Philip Murray, and other

continued on page 8



Members of the Citizens' Band performed throughout the weekend's events.

IWW centenary celebration creates initiative for the future

BY DAVID JOHNSON

The IWW's 100 year celebration in Chicago was not only a great success, but for me was a surprisingly pro-active initiative for the future of the labor movement.

Unlike every other anniversary celebration I have attended, where the participants and organizers focused solely on reminiscences and past glories, the IWW centennial event was an inspiring organizing vision for the future, and dare I say, a shining example of hope for the education and empowerment of workers world-wide.

To begin with, what encouraged me was the diversity of age groups represented. The largest age segment were people in their 20s to mid-thirties. But there were plenty of people in their mid-forties to late 50s, as well as a good number over 70 years old. In essence, the energy and fresh ideas of youth, tempered with the time-worn experience of the old-timers.

The workshops I attended were excellent examples of future organizing models. The first one was the history of the IWW – a slide show of old photographs, posters and cartoons, with narration, live music and song with Charlie King and Len Wallace. This presentation should be filmed and used as an educational tool to spread the word about what the IWW is all about. When possible, the live presentation with Charlie and Len should be done as well.



Wobblies at the infamous Haymarket Square memorial.

The other workshops were very practical in that they explained what has worked historically and what has recently been used successfully for organizing and direct action.

Coincidentally, the IWW centennial celebration was held one month before the upcoming national AFL-CIO convention (July 25 - 28). The AFL-CIO convention will more than likely produce a split and subsequent civil war of raiding by two different factions arguing about what method of corporate restructuring should be used to re-vitalize the labor movement. In essence, arguing about re-arranging deck chairs while the Titanic is sinking. Of course neither John Sweeney nor the Stern/Hoffa gang's plans include any empowerment or involvement of the rank and file (except to pay dues). Unlike the IWW, the problems of the AFL-CIO are the ultimate rotten fruit of business unionism.

Even though the IWW was almost driven into extinction by the 1950s, while the AFL-CIO prospered, the chickens have finally come home to roost. As the AFL-CIO's model of corporate collaboration and dictatorial control has begun to implode, the IWW is gaining ever-increasing respect and influence with unorganized workers, rank-and-file union members, and even staff people of other unions. The time-tested IWW model of unionism will be the model best suited for the future to fight back against world corporate domination and repressive governments.

The centennial celebration last month in Chicago and its practical workshops is in my opinion the beginning of the new world-wide labor movement from the ashes of the old.

ment of union supporters. Several workers have been threatened with firing, and many are now afraid to be seen talking with union supporters. New York Wobblies are working to build community support, and to help workers support each other. "My parents were steel workers," Sarah Bender noted, "but those jobs don't exist any more... We need to get the same things they had."

In an interesting sidelight, the Starbucks workers have also been reaching out to coffee growers, working with the fair trade movement to build solidarity between those Starbucks exploits across the entire production chain. There was a lively debate over whether the mainstream labor movement could adapt to the difficulties of organizing chain operations, which did not always grapple as clearly as it might with the differences between the IWW's commitment to direct action unionism and experiments by some unions to build more effective organizing strategies.

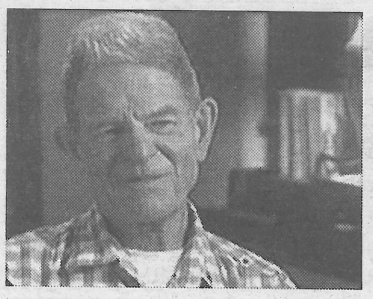
Another session addressed organizing geographically, with activists from IWW campaigns in Philadelphia and Northern California and two activists from Make the Road By Walking, an independent workers center organizing along Brooklyn's Knickerbocker Avenue corridor, who spoke in Spanish. These campaigns are trying to develop local industry standards, to support workers with individual grievances, and to develop strategies to address issues that confront all workers in these areas even in the absence of union recognition or formal negotiations.

In another session on battling bad bosses, Richard Seymour discussed a campaign Oregon Wobblies in the computer industry developed to confront the shady practices of software development firm RedcellX and its shady CEO, Troy Melquist. The campaign began when two IWW members complained that their pay checks had bounced, and has gradually escalated as the extent of Melquist's criminality became clear. Wobblies shook several hundred dollars in back pay loose through visits by a large grievance committee, and set up a web site to share their findings and make contacts with other victims.

Two members of the Chicago branch's Stop NICA Committee discussed a campaign they have mounted among messengers against the National Independent Contractors Association, a management consulting firm masquerading as a workers' association that helps companies convert messengers from employee to independent contractor status – in the process, stripping workers of their eligibility for benefits if they become unemployed or are injured on the job while making them pay substantial kickbacks to hold on to their jobs. Five of Chicago's 13 messenger firms have gone NICA, and the IWW is fighting to halt its spread and to kick it out of companies where it is already established. We have won rulings that messengers at one NICA company are employees, not independent contractors, and is considering measures to bring customers into the fight.

Following the last session, retail workers caucused to discuss their organizing while several participants walked to Haymarket Square, and saw the controversial memorial the city has installed there. The only people who seem to like the memorial are the police and politicians who successfully hijacked the Illinois Labor History Society's long campaign to erect a memorial there. Not only is the sculpture a really ugly claymation-style tableau, but, as one Wobbly put it, "The text was worded so vaguely as to offend no one, and was consequently pretty offensive."

Jon Bekken, Alexis Buss, Mark Damron, Lowell May, and Walt Weber contributed to this report.



Staughton Lynd on the IWW...

Nothing essential will change so long as working people are contractually prohibited from taking direct action whenever & however they may choose...

men of power in the new CIO negotiated the first contracts for auto workers and steelworkers, these contracts, even if only a few pages long, typically contained a no-strike clause. *All* workers in a given workplace were now prohibited from striking as particular crafts had been before. This remains the situation today.

Nothing in labor law required a no-strike clause. Indeed, the drafters of the original National Labor Relations Act (or Wagner Act) went out of their way to ensure that the law would *not* be used to curtail the right to strike. Not only does federal labor law affirm the right "to engage in . . . concerted activities for the purpose of . . . mutual aid or protection"; even as amended by the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, Section 502 of what is now the Labor Management Relations Act declares:

"Nothing in this Act shall be construed to require an individual employee to render labor or service without his consent, nor shall anything in this Act be construed to make the quitting of his labor by an individual employee an illegal act; nor shall any court issue any process to compel the performance by an individual employee of such labor or service, without his consent; nor shall the quitting of work by an employee or employees in good faith because of abnormally dangerous conditions for work at the place of employment of such employee or employees be deemed a strike under this chapter."

For good measure, the drafters added in Section 13 of the NLRA, now section 163 of the LMRA: "Nothing in this Act, except as specifically provided for herein, shall be construed so as either to interfere with or impede or diminish in any way the right to strike..."

In the face of this obvious concern on the part of the legislative drafters to protect the right to strike, the leaders of the emergent CIO gave that right away. To be sure, the courts helped, holding before World War II that workers who strike over economic issues can be replaced, and holding after World War II that a contract which provides for arbitration of grievances implicitly forbids strikes. But the courts are not responsible for the no-strike clause in the typical CIO contract. Trade union leaders are responsible.

Charles Morris' new book, *The Blue Eagle at Work,* argues that the original intent of federal labor law was that employers should be legally required to bargain, not only with unions that win NLRB elections, but also with so-called "minority" or "members-only" unions: unions that do not yet have majority support in a particular bargaining unit.

> *"Often I feel isolated because we're relatively small... This conference gave me hope and motivation. Not only did I get to hear IWW veterans speak about some of their experiences organizing and hear people like Staughton Lynd tell me to 'be patient' and not get frustrated when the results I want don't come right away, but I also got to meet with people from the Starbucks campaign, Make the Road by Walking, the Stockton truckers, and others who are doing exactly the kind of organizing that keeps me motivated..."*
>
> *— Steve Renzi, Philadelphia*

We can all agree with Professor Morris that the best way to build a union is not by circulating authorization cards, but by winning small victories on the shop floor and engaging the company "in interim negotiations regarding workplace problems as they arise." But Morris' ultimate objective, like that of most labor historians and almost all union organizers, is still a union that negotiates a legally enforceable collective bargaining agreement, including a management prerogatives clause that lets the boss close the plant and a no-strike clause that prevents the workers from doing anything about it.

In my view, and I believe in yours, nothing essential will change – not if Sweeney is replaced by Stern or Wilhelm, not if the SEIU breaks away from the AFL-CIO, not if the percentage of dues money devoted to organizing is multiplied many times – so long as working people are contractually prohibited from taking direct action whenever and however they may choose.

Glaberman, Sargent, Mann, Barbero & Weir

All this began to become clear to me only in the late 1960s, when a friend put in my hands a little booklet by Marty Glaberman entitled *Punching Out.* Therein Marty argues that in a workplace where there is a union and a collective bargaining contract, and the contract (as it almost always does) contains a no-strike clause, the shop steward becomes a cop for the boss. The worker is forbidden to help his buddy in time of need. An injury to one is no longer an injury to all.

As I say these words of Marty Glaberman's, almost forty years later, in my imagination he and the other departed comrades form up around me. We cannot see them but we can hear their words. John Sargent: "Without a contract we secured for ourselves agreement on working conditions and wages that we do not have today. ... [A]s a result of the enthusiasm of the people in the mill you had a series of strikes, wildcats, shut-downs, slow-downs, anything working people could think of to secure for themselves what they decided they had to have." Ed Mann: "I think we've got too much contract. You hate to be the guy who talks about the good old days, but I think the IWW had a darn good idea when they said: 'Well, we'll settle these things as they arise.'" Stan Weir: "[T]he new CIO leaders fought all attempts to build new industrial unions on a horizontal rather than the old vertical model. ... There can be unions run by regular working people on the job. There have to be."

Rumbles In Olympus

Here we should pause to take note of recent rumbles – in both senses of the word – on Mount Olympus. What is about to happen in the mainstream organized labor movement, and what do we think about it?

This is a challenging question. Our energies are consumed by very small, very local organizing projects. It is natural to look sidewise at the organized labor movement, with its membership in the hundreds of thousands, its impressive headquarters buildings, its apparently endless income from the dues check-off, its perpetual projects for turning the corner in organizing this year or next year, and to wonder, Are we wasting our time?

Moreover, there is not and should not be an impenetrable wall between what we try to do and traditional trade unionism at the local level. My rule of thumb is that national unions and national union reform movements almost always do more harm than good, but that local unions are a different story.

Workers need local unions. They will go on creating them whatever you and I may think, and for good reason. The critical decision for workers elected to local union office is whether they will use that position merely as a stepping stone to regional and national election campaigns, striving to rise vertically within the hierarchy of a particular union, or whether they will reach out horizontally to other workers and local union officers in other workplaces and other unions, so as to form class-wide entities – parallel central labor bodies, or sometimes, even official central labor bodies – within particular localities.

Such bodies have special historical importance. The "soviets" in the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 were improvised central labor bodies. Both the Knights of Labor and the IWW created such entities, especially during the first period of organizing in a given community when no single union was yet self-sufficient. My wife and I encountered a body of exactly this kind in Hebron in the occupied West Bank, and the Workers' Solidarity Club of Youngstown was an effort in the same direction. The "workers' centers" that seem to spring up naturally in communities of immigrant workers are another variant. What all these efforts have in common is that workers from different places of work sit in the same circle, and in the most natural way imaginable tend to transcend the parochialism of any particular union and to form a class point of view.

> *What drives me almost to tears is the spectacle of generation after generation of radicals seeking to change the world by cozying up to popular union leaders...*

Because many Wobblies will in this way become "dual carders," and often vigorously take part in the affairs of local unions, the line between our work and the activity of traditional, centralized, national trade unions needs to be drawn all the more clearly. From my point of view, it is a case of Robert Frost's two roads diverging within a wood: on the one hand, to mix metaphors, toward endless rearranging of the deck chairs on a sinking Titanic; on the other hand, toward the beginnings of another world.

As you know I am an historian. And what drives me almost to tears is the spectacle of generation after generation of radicals seeking to change the world by cozying up to popular union leaders. Communists did it in the 1930s, as Len DeCaux became the CIO's public relations man and Lee Pressman its general counsel; and Earl Browder, in an incident related by historian Nelson Lichtenstein, ordered Party members helping to lead the occupation of a General Motors plant near Detroit to give up their agitation lest they offend the CIO leadership.

Trotskyists and ex-Trotskyists in the second half of the last century repeated this mistaken strategy ... with less excuse, providing intellectual services for the campaigns of Walter Reuther, Arnold Miller, Ed Sadlowski and Ron Carey. And Left intellectuals almost without exception hailed the elevation of John Sweeney to the presidency of the AFL-CIO in 1995. Professors formed an organization of sycophantic academics, and encouraged their students to become organizers under the direction of national union staffers. In a parody of Mississippi "freedom summer," "union summers" used the energy of young people but denied them any voice in decisions.

In all these variations on a theme, students and intellectuals sought to make themselves useful to the labor movement by way of a relationship to national unions, rather than by seeking a helpful relationship with rank-and-file workers and members of local unions. In contrast, students at Harvard and elsewhere organized their own sit-ins to assist low-wage workers at the schools where they studied, and then it was John Sweeney who showed up to offer support to efforts that, to the best of my knowledge, young people themselves controlled.

I want to say a few more words about two exemplars of the paradigm I criticize: almost a century ago, John L. Lewis; and today, the not so dynamic duo, John Sweeney and Andrew Stern.

Lewis is an historical conundrum. In the 1920s and early 1930s, he established dictatorial control over the United Mine Workers union and smashed individuals who sought to challenge him from below, like John Brophy and Powers Hapgood, and dissenting organizations like the Progressive Miners here in Illinois.

However, to read his biographers from Saul Alinsky to Melvyn Dubofsky, like Paul on the road to Damascus the miners' leader experienced conversion in 1932-1933. He seized on section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act and sent his organizers throughout the coal fields with the message, "The president wants you to join the union." Then, confronting the standpat leadership of the AF of L, Lewis and other visionary leaders like Sidney Hillman led their members out of the AF of L to form, first the Committee for Industrial Organization, and then, after definitively seceding, the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

James Pope of Rutgers University Law School has been into the sources and tells a very different story. It was not Lewis, but rank-and-file miners in western Pennsylvania, who before the passage of the NIRA in spring 1933 began to form new local unions of the UMW. Lewis and his staff opposed them. Moreover, when in the summer and fall of 1933 the miners went on strike for union recognition, Lewis and his colleague Philip Murray repeatedly sought to settle strikes over the head of the workers on the picket lines although the goal of these massive direct actions had not been achieved.

Yes, Lewis wanted more members, just as the leaders of the five rebelling unions today wish to increase union "density." But what characterizes the national union leaders of the past and of the present is an absolute unwillingness to let rank-and-file workers decide for themselves when to undertake the sacrifice that direct action requires.

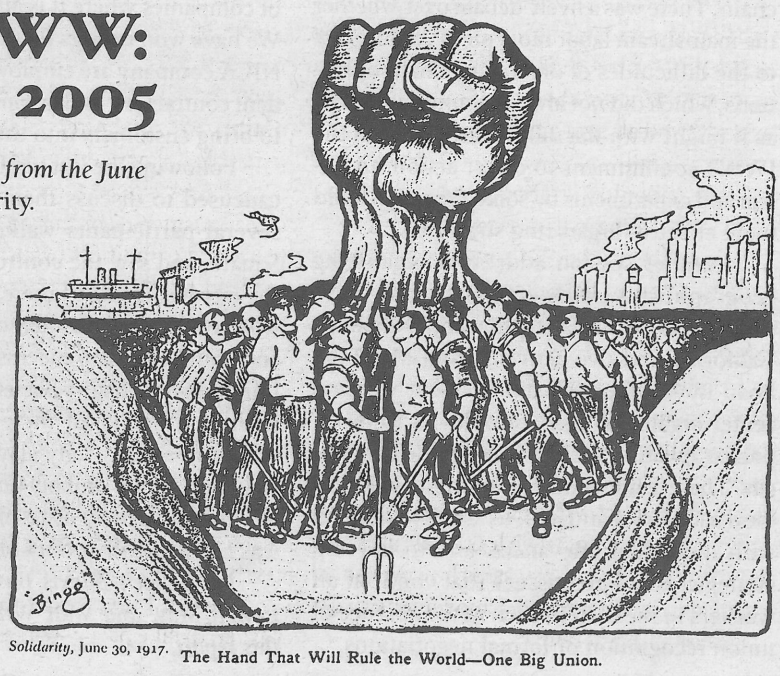
Consider John Sweeney.

Close observers should have known in the fall of 1995 that Sweeney was hardly the democrat some supposed him to be. Andrea Carney, who is with us today, was at the time

The IWW: 1905 - 2005

An IWW cartoon from the June 30, 1917, Solidarity.

The Industrial Workers of the World collection at the Archives of Labor & Urban Affairs at Wayne State University has many IWW cartoons and other material. Those interested in the collection should contact William.LeFevre



Solidarity, June 30, 1917. **The Hand That Will Rule the World—One Big Union.**

a hospital worker and member of Local 399, SEIU in Los Angeles. She tells in *The New Rank and File* how the Central American custodians whom the SEIU celebrated in its "Justice for Janitors" campaign, joined Local 399 and then decided that they would like to have a voice in running it. They connected with Anglo workers like Ms. Carney to form a Multiracial Alliance that contested all offices on the local union executive board. In June 1995 they voted the entire board out of office. In September 1995, as one of his last acts before moving on to the AFL-CIO, Brother Sweeney removed all the newly elected officers and put the local in trusteeship.

This action did not deter the draftsmen of the open letter to Sweeney I mentioned earlier. Appearing in publications like *In These Times* and the *New York Review of Books,* the letter stated that Sweeney's elevation was "the most heartening development in our nation's political life since the heyday of the civil rights movement." The letter continued:

"[T]he wave of hope that and energy that has begun to surge through the AFL-CIO offers a way out of our stalemate and defeatism. The commitment demonstrated by newly elected president John J. Sweeney and his energetic associates promises to once again make the house of labor a social movement around which we can rally."

The letter concluded: "We extend our support and cooperation to this new leadership and pledge our solidarity with those in the AFL-CIO dedicated to the cause of union democracy and the remobilization of a dynamic new labor movement." Signers included Stanley Aronowitz, Derrick Bell, Barbara Ehrenreich, Eric Foner, Todd Gitlin, David Montgomery, and Cornel West.

Closely following Sweeney's accession to the AFL-CIO presidency were his betrayals of strikes by Staley workers in Decatur, Illinois, and newspaper workers in Detroit. In Decatur, workers organized a spectacular "in plant" campaign of working to rule, and after Staley locked them out, there were the makings of a parallel central labor body and a local general strike including automobile and rubber workers. Striker and hunger striker Dan Lane spoke to the convention that elected Sweeney, and Sweeney personally promised Lane support if he would give up his hunger strike. But Sweeney did nothing to further the campaign to cause major consumers of Staley product to boycott the company. Meantime the Staley local had been persuaded to affiliate with the national Paperworkers' union, which proceeded to organize acceptance of a concessionary contract.

In Detroit – as Larry who is here could describe in more detail – strikers begged the new AFL-CIO leadership to convene a national solidarity rally in their support. Sweeney said No. On the occasion of Clinton's second inauguration in January 1997, leaders of the striking unions – including Ron Carey – decided to call off the strike without consulting the men and women who had been walking the picket lines for a year and a half. Only then did the Sweeney leadership call on workers from all over the country to join in a, now meaningless, gathering in Detroit.

What should the several dozen signers of the open letter to Sweeney have learned from these events? SEIU president Andrew Stern apparently believes that the lesson is that the union movement should be more centralized. What kind of labor movement would there be if he had his way? Local 399 had a membership of 25,000 spread all over metropolitan Los Angeles. The SEIU local where I live includes the states of Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia. This is top-down unionism run amok. The lesson for us is that, however humbly, in first steps however small, we need to be building a movement that is qualitatively different.

The Zapatistas and the Bolivians: To lead by obeying

And so of course we come in the end to the question, Yes, but how do we do that? Another world may be possible, but how do we get there?

The Preamble says: "By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old." But if capitalist factories and mainstream trade unions are not prototypes of the new society, where is it being built? What can we do so that others and we ourselves do not just think and say that "another world is possible," but actually begin to experience it, to live it, to taste it, here and now, within the shell of the old?

In recent years I have glimpsed a possible answer... It begins with the Zapatistas, and has been further developed by folks in the streets of Bolivia. Suppose the creation of a new society by the bourgeoisie is expressed in the equation, Rising Class plus New Institutions Within the Shell of the Old = State Power. All these years I have been struggling with how workers could create new institutions within the shell of capitalism. What the Zapatistas have suggested, echoing an old Wobbly theme, is that the equation does not need to include the term "State Power." Perhaps we can change capitalism fundamentally without taking state power. Perhaps we can change capitalism from below.

All of us sense that something qualitatively different happened in Chiapas on January 1, 1994; something organically connected to the anti-globalization protests that began five years later.

What exactly was that something? My wife Alice and I were in San Cristóbal a few years ago and had the opportunity to talk to a woman named Teresa Ortiz. She had lived in the area a long time and since then has published a book of oral histories of Chiapan women.

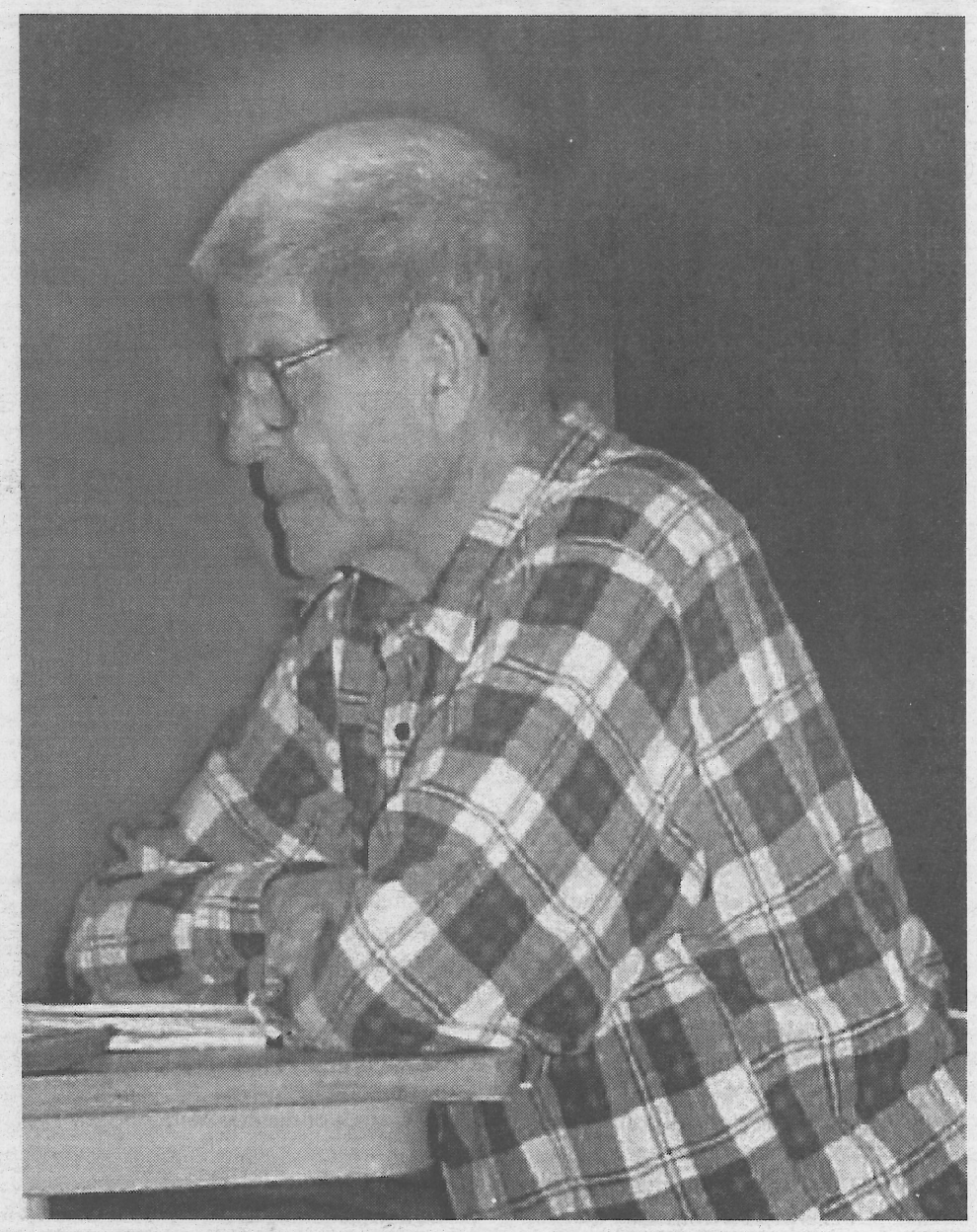
We need an alternative revolutionary strategy ... an alliance between whatever movement can be brought into being in the U.S. and the vast, tumultuous resistance of the developing world.

Ms. Ortiz told us that there were three sources of Zapatismo. The first was the craving for land, the heritage of Emiliano Zapata and the revolution that he led at the time of World War I. This longing for economic independence expressed itself in the formation of communal landholdings, or *ejidos,* and the massive migration of impoverished campesinos into the Lacandón jungle.

A second source of Zapatismo, we were told, was liberation theology. Bishop Samuel Ruiz was the key figure. He sponsored what came to be called *tomar conciencia.* It means "taking conscience," just as we speak of "taking thought." The process of taking conscience involved the creation of complex combinations of Mayan and Christian religiosity, as in the church Alice and I visited where there was no altar, where a thick bed of pine needles was strewn on the floor and little family groups sat in little circles with lighted candles, and where there was a saint to whom one could turn if the other saints did not do what they were asked. Taking conscience also resulted in countless grassroots functionaries with titles like "predeacon," "catechist," or "delegate of the Word": the shop stewards of the people's Church who have been indispensable everywhere in Latin America.

The final and most intriguing component of Zapatismo, according to Teresa Ortiz, was the Mayan tradition of *mandar obediciendo:* "to lead by obeying." She explained what it meant at the village level. Imagine all of us here as a village. We feel the need for, to use her examples, a teacher and a storekeeper. But these two persons can be freed for those communal tasks only if we, as a community, undertake to cultivate their *milpas,* their corn fields. In the most literal sense their ability to take leadership roles depends on our willingness to provide their livelihoods.

When representatives thus chosen are asked to take part in regional gatherings, they



are likely to be instructed delegates. Thus, during the initial negotiations in 1994, the Zapatista delegates insisted that the process be suspended for several weeks while they took what had been tentatively agreed to back to the villages, who rejected it. The heart of the process remains the gathered villagers, the local *asemblea.*

Only upon reading a good deal of the Zapatista literature did an additional level of meaning become clear to me.

At the time of the initial uprising, the Zapatistas seem to have entertained a traditional Marxist strategy of seizing national power by military means. The "First Declaration of the Lacandón Jungle," issued on January 2, 1994, gave the Zapatista military forces the order: "Advance to the capital of the country, overcoming the federal army."

But, in the words of Harvard historian John Womack: "In military terms the EZLN offensive was a wonderful success on the first day, a pitiful calamity on the second." Within a very short time, three things apparently happened: 1) the public opinion of Mexican civil society came down on the side of the Indians of Chiapas and demanded negotiation; 2) President Salinas declared a cease fire, and sent an emissary to negotiate in the cathedral of San Cristóbal; 3) Subcomandante Marcos carried out a clandestine coup within the failed revolution, agreed to negotiations, and began to promulgate a dramatically new strategy.

Beginning early in 1994, Marcos says explicitly, over and over and over again: We don't see ourselves as a vanguard and we don't want to take state power. Thus, at the first massive *encuentro,* the National Democratic Convention in the Lacandón jungle in August 1994, Marcos said that the Zapatistas had made "a decision not to impose our point of view"; that they rejected "the doubtful honor of being the historical vanguard of the multiple vanguards that plague us"; and finally:

"The moment has come to say to everyone that we neither want, nor are we able, to occupy the place that some hope we will occupy, the place from which all opinions will come, all the answers, all the routes, all the truth. We are not going to do that."

Marcos then took the Mexican flag and gave it to the delegates, in effect telling them: "It's your flag. Use it to make a democratic Mexico. We Zapatistas hope we have created some space within which you can act."

What? A Left group that doesn't want state power? There must be some mistake. But no, he means it. And because it is a perspective so different from that traditional in Marxism, because it represents a fresh synthesis of what is best in the Marxist and anarchist traditions, I want to quote several more examples.

In the "Fourth Declaration from the Lacandón Jungle," on January 1, 1996, it states that the Zapatista Front of National Liberation will be a "political force that does not aspire to take power[,] ... that can organize citizens' demands and proposals so that he who commands, commands in obedience to the popular will[,] ... that does not struggle to take political power but for the democracy where those who command, command by obeying."

In September 1996, in an address to Mexican civil society, Marcos says that in responding to the earthquake of 1985 Mexican civil society proved to itself that you can participate without aspiring to public office, that you can organize politically without being in a political party, that you can keep an eye on the government and pressure it to "lead by obeying," *that you can have an effect and remain yourself.*

Likewise in August 1997, in "Discussion Documents for the Founding Congress of the Zapatista Front of National Liberation," the Zapatistas declare that they represent "a new form of doing politics, without aspiring to take power and without vanguardist positions." We "will not struggle to take power," they continue. The Zapatista Front of National Liberation "does not aspire to take power." Rather, "we are a political force that does not seek to take power, that does not pretend to be the vanguard of a specific class, or of society as a whole."

Especially memorable is a communication from the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) dated October 2, 1998, and addressed to "the Generation of Dignity of 1968," that is, to former students who had survived the massacre in Mexico City prior to the 1968 Olympics. Here Marcos speaks of "the politics of below," of the "Mexico of those who weren't then, are not now, and will never be leaders." This, he says, is the Mexico of those who don't build ladders to

continued on page 10

Staughton Lynd...

continued from page 9

climb above others, but who look beside them to find another and make him or her their *compañero* or *compañera*, brother, sister, mate, buddy, friend, colleague, or whatever word is used to describe that long, treacherous, collective path that is the struggle of: everything for everyone.

Finally, at the *zocalo* in March 2001, after this Coxey's Army of the poor had marched from Chiapas to Mexico City, Marcos once more declared: "We are not those who aspire to take power and then impose the way and the word. We will not be."

For the last four years the Zapatistas and Marcos have been quiet, presumably building the new society day by day in those villages of Chiapas where they have majority support. If one wishes further insight as to how the politics of below might unfold, the place to look may be Bolivia. It's too soon to say a great deal. The most substantial analysis I have encountered describes the movement in the language of "leading by obeying":

"Without seizing power directly, popular movements ... suddenly exercised substantial, ongoing control from below of state authorities. ... [The] insurrectionists did not attempt to seize the state administration, and instead set up alternative institutions of self-government in city streets and neighborhoods ... and in the insurgent highlands. ...

"Protesters, who took over the downtown center, intentionally refrained from marching on the national palace. This was to avoid bloodshed, but also a recognition that substantial power was already in their hands."

International Solidarity

There remains, finally, the most difficult problem of all. "An injury to one is an injury to all" means that we must act in solidarity with working people everywhere, so that, in the words of the Preamble, "the workers of the world organize as a class."

This means that we can not join with steel industry executives in seeking to keep foreign steel out of the country: we need a solution to worldwide over-capacity that protects steelworkers everywhere. We can not, like the so-called reform candidate for president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters a few years ago, advocate even more effort to keep Mexican truck drivers from crossing the Rio Grande. We should emulate the Teamsters local in Chicago where a resolution against the Iraq war passed overwhelmingly after Vietnam vets took the mike to share their experience, and the local went on to host the founding national meeting of Labor Against the War.

I believe the IWW has a special contribution to make. Wobblies were alone or almost alone among labor organizations a hundred years ago to welcome as members African Americans, unskilled foreign-born workers, and women. Joe Hill not only was born in Sweden and apparently took part in the Mexican Revolution, but, according to Franklin Rosemont, may have had a special fondness for Chinese cooking. This culture of internationalism can sustain and inspire us as we seek concrete ways to express it in the 21st century.

I have concluded that no imaginable labor movement or people's movement in this country will ever be sufficiently strong that it, alone, can confront and transform United States capitalism and imperialism.

I am not the only person who has reached this conclusion, but most who do so then say to themselves, I believe, "OK, then I need to cease pretending to be a revolutionary and support reform instead."

I suggest that what we need is an alternative revolutionary strategy. That strategy, it seems to me, can only be an alliance between whatever movement can be brought into being in the United States and the vast, tumultuous resistance of the developing world.

Note that I say "alliance," as between students and workers, or any other equal partners. I am not talking about kneejerk, uncritical support for the most recent Third World autocrat to capture our imaginations.

We in Youngstown have taken some very small first steps in this direction that I would like to share.

In the late 1980s skilled workers from Youngstown, Aliquippa and Pittsburgh made a trip to Nicaragua. Ned Mann, Ed Mann's son, is a sheet metal worker. He helped steelworkers at Nicaragua's only steel mill, at Tipitapa north of Managua, build a vent in the roof over a particularly smoky furnace. Meantime the late Bob Schindler, a lineman for Ohio Edison, worked with a crew of Nicaraguans doing similar work. He spoke no Spanish, they spoke no English. They got on fine. Bob was horrified at the tools available to his colleagues and, when he got back to the States, collected a good deal of Ohio Edison's inventory and sent it South. The next year, he went back to Nicaragua, and travelled to the northern village where Benjamin Linder was killed while trying to develop a small hydroelectric project. Bob did what he could to complete Linder's dream.

About a dozen of us from Youngstown have also gone to a labor school south of Mexico City related to the Frente Autentico del Trabajo, the network of unions independent of the Mexican government.

These are tiny first steps, I know. But they are in the right direction. Why not take learning Spanish more seriously and, whenever we can, encourage fellow workers to join us in spending time with our Latin American counterparts?

Joe Hill is a Palestinian. He is also an Israeli refusenik. He is imprisoned in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo... He works for Walmart and in South African diamond mines. He took part in the worldwide dock strike a few years ago and sees in that kind of international solidarity the hope of the future. Recently he has spent time in occupied factories in Argentina...

And on down that same road, why not, some day, joint strike demands from workers for General Motors in Puebla, Mexico; in Detroit; and in St. Catherine's, Ontario?

Instead of the TDU candidate for Teamsters president criticizing Jimmy Hoffa for doing too little to keep Mexican truck drivers out of the United States, why not a conference of truck drivers north and south of the Rio Grande to draw up a single set of demands?

Why not, instead of the United Steelworkers joining with U.S. steel companies to lobby for increased quotas on steel imports, a task force of steelworkers from all countries to draw up a common program about how to deal with capitalist overproduction, how to make sure that each major developing country controls its own steelmaking capacity, and how to protect the livelihoods of all steelworkers, wherever they may live?

Perhaps I can end, as I began, with a story. About a dozen years ago my wife and I were in the Golan Heights, a part of Syria occupied by Israel in 1967. There are a few Arab villages left in the Golan Heights, and at one of them our group was invited to a barbecue in an apple orchard. There was a very formidable white lightning, called *arak*. It developed that each group was called on to sing for the other. I was nominated for our group. I decided to sing "Joe Hill" but I felt that, before doing so, I needed to make it clear that Joe Hill was not a typical parochial American. As I laboriously began to do so, our host, who had had more to drink than I, held up his hand. "You don't have to explain. We understand. Joe Hill was a Spartacist. Joe Hill was in Chile and in Mexico. But today," he finished, "Joe Hill is a Palestinian."

Joe Hill is a Palestinian. He is also an Israeli refusenik. He is imprisoned in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo, where his Koran along with the rest of his belongings is subject to constant shakedowns and disrespect. He works for Walmart and also in South African diamond mines. He took part in the worldwide dock strike a few years ago and sees in that kind of international solidarity the hope of the future. Recently he has spent a lot of time in occupied factories in Argentina, where he shuttles back and forth between the workers in the plants and the neighborhoods that support them.

In New York City, Joe Hill has taken note of the fact that businesses like grocery stores or restaurants are vulnerable to consumer boycotts, and if the pickets present themselves as a community group there is no violation of labor law. In Pennsylvania, he has the cell next to Mumia Abu Jamal at S.C.I. Greene in Waynesburg. In Ohio, he hangs out with the "Lucasville Five": the five men framed and condemned to death because they were leaders in a 1993 prison uprising.

He was in Seattle, Quebec City, Genoa, and Cancun, and will be at the next demonstration against globalization wherever it takes place. In Bolivia he wears a black hat and is in the streets, protesting the privatization of water and natural gas, calling for the nationalization of these resources, and for government from below by a people's assembly. As the song says, "Where workingmen are out on strike, it's there you'll find Joe Hill."

Let's do our best to be there beside him.

What kind of unionism do we need?

BY WALT WEBER

During the discussion on organizing in chain stores, someone asked a great question: how will the IWW differentiate ourselves from the SEIU and their organizing initiatives? This got me thinking, because as the piecards meet to re-arrange the deck chairs on the Titanic that is the AFL-CIO, it is important to be able to explain what makes us different from these so-called labor unions.

If you were to listen to the rhetoric of SEIU president Andy Stern, you might never know that there is a difference between their organization and our own. He speaks long and often about organizing the unorganized, respect for immigrants, bottom-up organizing, and his own vision of the one big union.

"It was really cool that people were so interested in the South Street campaign. ... I really had a good experience. It made me feel like I have kind of a fresh start, and a new slant on how to do things with our campaign. — *Nakiya*

"Going to Chicago was a wonderful experience. Being able to see all those union members come together, listening at the workshops and learning some things that we can use to help make the South Street Workers Union grow... The struggles that people are doing is so inspiring..." — *Darren*

While his rhetoric may sound nice, once it is compared to the actions of SEIU under his leadership, the contradictions between word and deed – as well as the differences between the IWW and the SEIU – become very clear.

Let's look first at the talk of bottom-up organizing and empowering rank-and-file members. Although this is a keystone of the SEIU platform, a quick review of its organizing style reveals severe differences. Let's begin with the celebrated Justice for Janitors campaign in the Los Angles area, a campaign touted by SEIU as one of their greatest victories.

How was this campaign begun? Was it started by a group of workers who decided to try to change conditions in their work place? No, this campaign began with SEIU contacting the bosses of the janitorial companies and working out a deal.

SEIU told the companies it would not make any demands on behalf of their workers until it had reached 80 percent density in the area, in order to keep unionized firms from being put at a competitive disadvantage. The companies agreed not to run an anti-union campaign in exchange for SEIU not bringing public pressure or criticizing them.

So, number one in the SEIU playbook is meeting with the bosses before any organizing begins and assuring them that the union does not seek to damage their businesses.

Next, SEIU went to the janitors and asked them to sign authorization cards, which were then presented to the bosses as evidence of majority support. After most bosses recognized the union, SEIU negotiated a deal for



grievance procedures, modest pay raises and health care. These are all good things, but were they the workers' main concerns? Maybe. SEIU thought these were what they could win, so they negotiated for them, forgetting to ask the workers what they might want.

After reaching an agreement, SEIU asked workers to vote whether to accept it. Since we all know that voting yes or no on something is the highest form of democracy, clearly this was a democratic process that represented the needs and desires of all the workers involved (even if the contracts were typically approved by a tiny fraction of the work force).

I believe that a second yardstick for union democracy is the ability to make decisions on a local level. Despite the fact that true democracy should mean decisions made on the smallest level by the people who are directly affected, Stern's vision is to do away with local unions altogether. The SEIU "local" in Ohio covers three states, and over 100,00 members. This fits with Stern's vision, which involves building huge locals that will fight against the huge companies. In Stern's own words, "local union structure [often] does more to handicap workers than it does to help."

Showing a further commitment to "democracy," Stern and his gang have taken a brave stand against dissent from union locals. Even moderate disagreement with orders from the top can result in trusteeship from the international SEIU. Since he took over as president in 1996, over 40 locals have been put into trusteeship. The message is clear: If

continued next column

It is we who plowed the prairies: 100 years of the IWW

BY X348100, WINNIPEG

On May 6, the Winnipeg General Membership Branch of the IWW hosted its local event to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the One Big Union.

Taking its name from a Ralph Chaplin lyric, the evening was entitled "It's We Who Plowed the Prairies: 100 Years of the IWW" and took place at the Mondragon Cafe & Bookstore. About 60 people came out to enjoy the evening of entertainment and ideas.

The evening began with a presentation and slide show by Patrick McGuire on the history of the IWW in Manitoba. This included stories of Winnipeg's Polish/Ukrainian IWW local in the early 1910s, IWW speakers being arrested in the street, and the connections between IWW organizer Dmytro Stechyshyn and the Ukrainian Labour Temple. Agricultural workers organizing, the Canadian OBU, and the revival of the Winnipeg GMB since the late 1980s rounded out the presentation.

McGuire concluded by outlining how the contemporary labour movement needs to renew itself through Wobbly tactics of solidarity, direct action and genuine internationalism. The slide show consisted of historical photos and items helpfully provided by archivist William Lefevre from the IWW collection in Detroit.

The second portion of the program consisted of musical entertainment. The 1919 Insurrectionary Orchestra (FWs Garth Hardy & Patrick McGuire) treated the crowd to classic Wobbly sing-alongs and newer folk ditties of resistance. ATSEA, a new post-emocore outfit featuring FWs Ian La Rue and Ethan Osland, blew the cafe away with melodic songs of love and hope. The evening closed with the incendiary rhymes of lapsed-Wobbly rapper Pip Skid, whose tunes got fists pumping in the air.

It is fair to conclude that at 100 the IWW is not on its death bed, but rather that its ideas and vision are inspiring new generations to abolish wage slavery and build a cooperative commonwealth!

Fight for shorter Hours

Flat-world fatigue

That's how the Dover, N.H., *Citizen* headlined a May 31 Associated Press report, subtitled "globalization breeds interminable work day."

As work is outsourced around the world, surviving workers (and managers) put in 12-hour days in order to coordinate work across the planet. "Even the most unapologetic globalization proponents ... acknowledge that offshoring has resulted in longer, stranger hours for white-collar workers... Although many techies swapped social lives for 80-hour weeks during the ephemeral dot-com boom, the 24-hour business cycle seems even more stressful than the caffeinated '90s."

The AP reporter quotes CWA organizer Marcus Courtney worrying over "a further eroding of the 50-hour work week."

Take back your time

The Take Back Your Time conference is August 4-7 at Seattle University. On Friday, August 5 (7:30 p.m., Pigott Auditorium), International Labor Organization research officer Jon Messenger, editor of *Working Time and Workers' Preferences in Industrialized Countries*, and Ann Crittenden, author of *The Price of Motherhood*, will speak at a public session on the need for shorter hours. For conference details, www.timeday.org.

Salt Lake Wobs celebrate IWW centenary from a soapbox

BY NATE SMITH

An unusual event surprised workers taking their noon-time lunch break on June 27, at the corner of 200 South and Main Streets in Salt Lake City. A local Wobbly ran with hands waving up the block of 200 South Street while shouting, "I've been robbed; help, help, I've been robbed."

A crowd gathered and got a real treat when their fellow worker jumped atop the soapbox and boldly proclaimed, "I've been robbed by the capitalist system!" After this stunt we lined up around the guitarist on the soapbox and sang the Joe Hill original, "Preacher and the Slave." After our dramatic opener we serenaded onlookers and friends with such Wobbly classics as "Dump the Bosses off Your Back," "There is Power in a Union" and "Solidarity Forever."

The Salt Lake IWW members took turns speaking out on the soapbox. Many topics were covered, from the abuse of workers due to global trade agreements and corporate dominance, the bosses' wars of empire, religious oppression, and even working class revolution. Wobblies shouted their anger at the poverty draft into a so-called "volunteer" military, the spread of abusive working conditions due to NAFTA and the coming threat that CAFTA poses to the future of workers' rights in Central America.

A sense of solidarity prevailed, with words of encouragement coming from the crowd as each participant took a turn mounting the soapbox and shouting their message to passersby. To our surprise not a single cop was to be found – not a bit of police presence even though we chose not to obtain a permit for the event. Our group of 15-20 was able to attract audiences to listen to our speeches and songs throughout the lunch hour. Copies of the *Industrial Worker* were distributed during the event and even the hot dog vendor at the street corner took several copies.

The intersection of 200 South and Main streets in Salt Lake City has a special historical significance to the IWW. We chose this street corner because it was the traditional site where Wobblies gave soapbox oratory during the early 20th Century. Throughout the summer of 1915, IWW members and supporters staged a save Joe Hill soapbox campaign on the northeast corner of the intersection. During Joe Hill's 1915 murder trial Wobblies were on a soapbox proclaiming Joe's innocence and exposing the police frame up. The local cops didn't take to this. Hundreds of Wobblies were arrested at this street corner while asserting their right to free speech. Salt Lake City soon passed an ordinance that restricted public speech and assembly by requiring approval of the city council or the chief of police. In spite of the police crackdown, the free speech fights continued at 200 S Main St.

The situation became deadly when on October 30, 1915, Officer Myton of the Salt Lake City police department confronted Wobbly Roy Horton on the street. Myton was off duty at the time of the encounter, but he went home to get his revolver. He returned to the street, gun in hand, and shot Roy Horton to death. Myton was charged with murder but was later cleared of all charges. Joe Hill was convicted of murder and executed by the state of Utah on November 19, 1915. The Salt Lake City GMB holds a memorial event each year at Sugarhouse Park to commemorate Joe Hill at the site of his wrongful execution. Please contact us for more information about the annual Joe Hill memorial.

What kind of unionism?...

you deviate from the program, we will put you back on course any way we have to.

Stern always claims that these are necessary sacrifices if we want to fight against big, well-organized enemies. He touts the destruction of democracy as increasing democracy, top-down organizing as bottom-up initiatives, and getting rid of local unions as helping to build local workers' power. Does this sound familiar to anyone? Because it seems like the same crap that is being shoveled elsewhere in our society.

I think that the contradictions between the IWW and SEIU are pretty apparent. Our union was founded 100 years ago on the premise that there was not enough union democracy, and that we needed to build more. From the beginning, the IWW has believed in the ability of rank-and-file workers to make decisions for themselves on the local level. Also, we believe that workers should organize themselves as much as possible, and we try to build actual rank-and-file movements – not simply going to workers and asking them to sign a card or vote yes, but building the union as a daily force on the job and in their lives.

There are many other differences. We refuse to surrender the right to strike, and we refuse to collude with the bosses. Our concerns are never for the bosses' profits. No IWW campaign would ever start out by organizers meeting with the bosses. And we certainly would never seek to take away democracy from a local union that disagrees with the General Executive Board.

These differences speak toward the two largest differences between the IWW and the so-called mainstream labor movement: we hate the economic system of capitalism and we believe in the idea of workers' control.

The reason that SEIU and the AFL-CIO in general are so collaborationist is that they strongly believe in capitalism, a system that seeks to keep workers oppressed and stifle actual democracy. These unions present no vision for the future, and instead focus only on the here and now. Their vision, when they are not busy giving back past-won gains to the bosses, is just to win a few more dollars and maybe a couple more days off. Their vision is based on their slogan, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work," which accepts the existence of the capitalist system indefinitely.

No one in the AFL-CIO supports the idea of workers' control. Instead of trying to build a movement based on job control and economic democracy, they continue to support the exploitative economic hierarchy that is slowly killing the earth and everyone on it. Andy Stern and his ilk believe that the best way to beat the bosses is to join them.

Despite all the rhetoric that is put forth by Stern and the "enlightened" vanguard he claims to lead, his organization and the IWW are very different in nature. While we strive to build the labor movement with militancy and class consciousness from the bottom up, he stands as a benevolent dictator, commanding those that are underneath him, supposedly in their best interest. As far as I am concerned, Andy Stern is just another boss, who needs to be dumped off our back as we build the real One Big Union for another hundred years of resistance.

Pacific Northwest Labor History Association

The PNLHA conference in Vancouver featured a number of presentations on the IWW including plenaries by IWW General Secretary-Treasurer Alexis Buss and *Wobblies!* co-editor Paul Buhle. Workshops addressed the IWW press in Australia and the U.S., the IWW response to World War I, the historical and contemporary IWW song-writing tradition, and IWW organizing in Western Canada and among harvest workers.

Greetings from France: *We confront the same situation as yours: how to set up a union ... when the boss can fire every one of us whenever he wants? ...*
Institutional unionism has proved unable to bar the deterioration in the standards of living despite the agreements they've signed: reality has demonstrated that no common interests can be found between the workers and the capitalist class...
Many signs point to a return of the workers' fighting spirit... Despite its small size, the CNT takes its part in this rebirth and is strengthening itself by building new unions, organizing more workers and increasing its influence...

Greetings from Sweden: *We, the Stockholm Metro and Tramway Section of SAC – Syndikalisterna wish to extend our congratulations to our comrades of the IWW. With pride, the IWW, can look back on their one hundred years of history. Not only as a source of inspiration for workers all over the world, but also as a model of existence of revolutionary industrial unionism. We all hope to never see another hundred years of struggle for IWW. For the revolution in our lifetime.*

IWW

1905-2005: Celebrating a Century of Revolutionary Industrial Unionism

Berkeley, Calif.: Labor historian Paul Buhle will discuss the history of the Wobblies and his new co-edited book, *Wobblies A graphic history of the Industrial Workers of the World.* July 22, 7:30 p.m. Cody's Bookstore, 2454 Telegraph Ave.
"100 Years of Struggle – a celebration of the IWW and the international labor movement." Program features writer Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz; Folk This!, performing a program of Wobbly songs; and members of Berkeley's Allegro Non Troppo opera company, singing labor hymns and selections from "Pins and Needles" and "The Mother." July 24, 7:30 p.m. Admission $8 - 12. La Pena, 3105 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley.
Ann Arbor, Mich.: "Soapboxers and Saboteurs: 100 Years of Wobbly Solidarity." Exhibit commemorating 100 years of the IWW with materials from the Labadie Collection. Sept. 6 - Nov. 23; University of Michigan Special Collections Library. October 19: Reception featuring labor singer Anne Feeney.
Kansas City, MO: Conference on Radical Economics and the Labor Movement. Sept. 15-17, Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering & Technology. To register or for accommodations information and updated program: http://cas.umkc.edu/econ/iwwconf/
Detroit Mich.: North American Labor History Conference, focusing on the IWW's first 100 years. An exhibit commemorating the IWW centenary and exhibiting artifacts from the IWW archives will open in conjunction with the conference. Oct. 21-23, Wayne State University.
More details, as well as a timeline of IWW history and other centenary materials, can be found at www.iww.org/projects/centenary, which is regularly updated to include new events.

Organize those papers

Labor archivist Jane Latour has produced a guide to archives for rank-and-file activists, which includes a listing of the major U.S. labor archives, a brief discussion of union democracy and reform movement collections, and suggestions for labor activists on how they can better organize and preserve their records and make them available to future historians and activists.

Copies are available from the Association for Union Democracy (140 Montgomery St., Brooklyn NY 11225) or in downloadable .pdf format at www.unionden.ocracy.org.

SEIU to launch new labor federation?

In a move paralleling the early steps toward the CIO's break from the American Federation of Labor, on June 15 the presidents of the Service Employees, Teamsters, United Food and Commercial Workers, Laborers, and UNITE HERE announced they had launched the Change to Win Coalition, a formal alliance complete with its own constitution and bylaws. SEIU and UNITE HERE are hiring organizers for an entity known as the United Service Workers. Two independent unions, the Carpenters and the National Educational Association, have indicated they might be interested in joining a new labor federation.

While the dissidents have of late been slightly more circumspect in their threats to quit the Federation if AFL-CIO President John Sweeney is not ousted, the decision to organize a parallel organization is being watched closely.

Meanwhile, AFL-CIO leaders say they're making progress toward reaching agreement with leaders of some of the dissident unions, adopting rules that would give top officials more power. And, in case those efforts don't succeed, they've sent out warning letters to all local labor councils warning them that in the event of a split the councils will be required to expel all unaffiliated unions.

The five unions account for some 5 million of the AFL-CIO's 13 million members. Were the Carpenters and NEA to join the five in a new labor federation, it would start with more than 6 million members.

Recent history suggests that any new federation would indeed put more resources into organizing, but would not necessarily be more democratic or militant. The coalition includes unions with a progressive reputation (notably Unite Here) as well as unions with a long tradition of concessions bargaining. What they have in common is traditions of strong top-down leadership and leaders who badly want to advance.

While many workers are concerned by outsourcing, for example, SEIU President Andy Stern says that unions should help employers operate more efficiently. Stern told the magazine Human Resources Outsourcing Today that by fighting outsourcing "unions have been an anti-competitive force." Instead, Stern says, unions should partner with employers in "a risk-sharing partnership" to retrain workers who lose their jobs.

The union's Partnership agreement with Kaiser Permanente Health Care offers a good example. While SEIU officials say they have the best contract in the country, many workers say the union has done little to improve working conditions. "It's as bad as it ever was, says Andrea Carney, who retired recently. "People call the business agents and don't hear back from them… Business agents don't show up at the worksite – people never see them. "

SEIU 880 union-busting

Workers for Service Employees Local 880 – one of three ACORN-run megalocals for low-wage workers – filed unfair labor practice charges after the local fired three workers and disciplined six more for organizing to improve working conditions. The charges were settled and Local 880 staff are now represented by the Chicago Newspaper Guild.

54 percent pay hike

Pay for chief executives of the 500 largest U.S. companies increased by an average of 54 percent last year, according to *Forbes* magazine. The best-paid CEO was Yahoo's Terry Semel, who hauled in $230.6 million while shipping jobs overseas by the boatload.

William McGuire of UnitedHealth Group, the U.S.'s leading insurer, was the third-highest paid CEO on the list. His pay of $124.8 million could cover health insurance premiums for nearly 34,000 people.

CEO pay averaged $10.2 million in 2004, counting salary, bonus and other compensation such as exercised stock options and vested stock grants.

Full-time workers' pay averaged just $32,594. That's 11 percent less than 1973's average pay of $36,629, adjusting for inflation, although worker productivity rose 78 percent between 1973 and 2004.

More mandatory drug tests

Indiana Plumbers' union Local 136 has reached an agreement allowing contractors to require mandatory random drug tests of all workers, on a rotating schedule designed to ensure that every pipe trades worker will be required to piss in a cup at least once a year. Workers can be fired for illegal drug use, and also for "misusing" prescription or nonprescription medications.

In a return of the notorious Fink Cards of old, workers who have tested as drug-free are given identification cards that reflect the results of the employee's most recent negative drug/alcohol testing. To be allowed to work on a project, Indiana construction workers must possess a valid card.

Farewell, Fellow Worker Sukhraj Singh

BY ADAM WELCH, BRUCE VALDE, AND HARJIT SINGH GILL

On July 1, Sukhraj Singh, a 26-year-old truck driver working for Progressive Transportation Services in the Stockton area took his own life at his home in Lodi, Calif., a town north of Stockton.

According to IWW truckers who knew him, Singh was in debt trouble and was working extra loads to try and make ends meet.

He began driving with PTS after 19 union members quit en masse over poor working conditions. As a result, Singh did not have the opportunity to join the union.

A PTS spokesperson claims Singh was not in any trouble with the company, but fellow workers say that Singh had been suspended, which may have aggravated his financial problems. Singh is survived by his wife and two daughters, ages 4 and 2.

The Bay Area General Membership Branch is collecting donations for the family, which can be sent to IWW headquarters. Please earmark funds "In memory of Sukhraj Singh."

Scottish Parliament to dock IWW members' pay

The IWW's Scottish Parliament Job Branch has filed a strong protest against the Parliament's decision to strip the Scottish Socialist Party members' 14 staff of one month's wages, noting that the decision – taken by the Labour Party majority – violates the workers' fundamental labour rights.

The protest was filed jointly with the National Union of Journalists. The IWW and NUJ represent the 14 workers affected.

The issue arises from a decision to strip the SSP delegation of its salaries, facilities and support staff after the four Socialist parliamentarians protested within the chamber against a government ban on protests at the site of the G8 summit in Gleneagles despite parliamentary votes to allow demonstrations. Protests were subsequently allowed.

Neither the unions representing the affected workers nor the SSP, which employes them, were informed of or permitted to attend the meeting of the Scottish Parliament committees where the decision was taken, nor were the IWW or NUJ notified that action against our members was being considered.

If the decision is not reversed, the workers affected stand to lose over £13,000 in wages as a result of the politicians' decision to punish them for their employers' actions in defense of democratic rights.

Official Notices

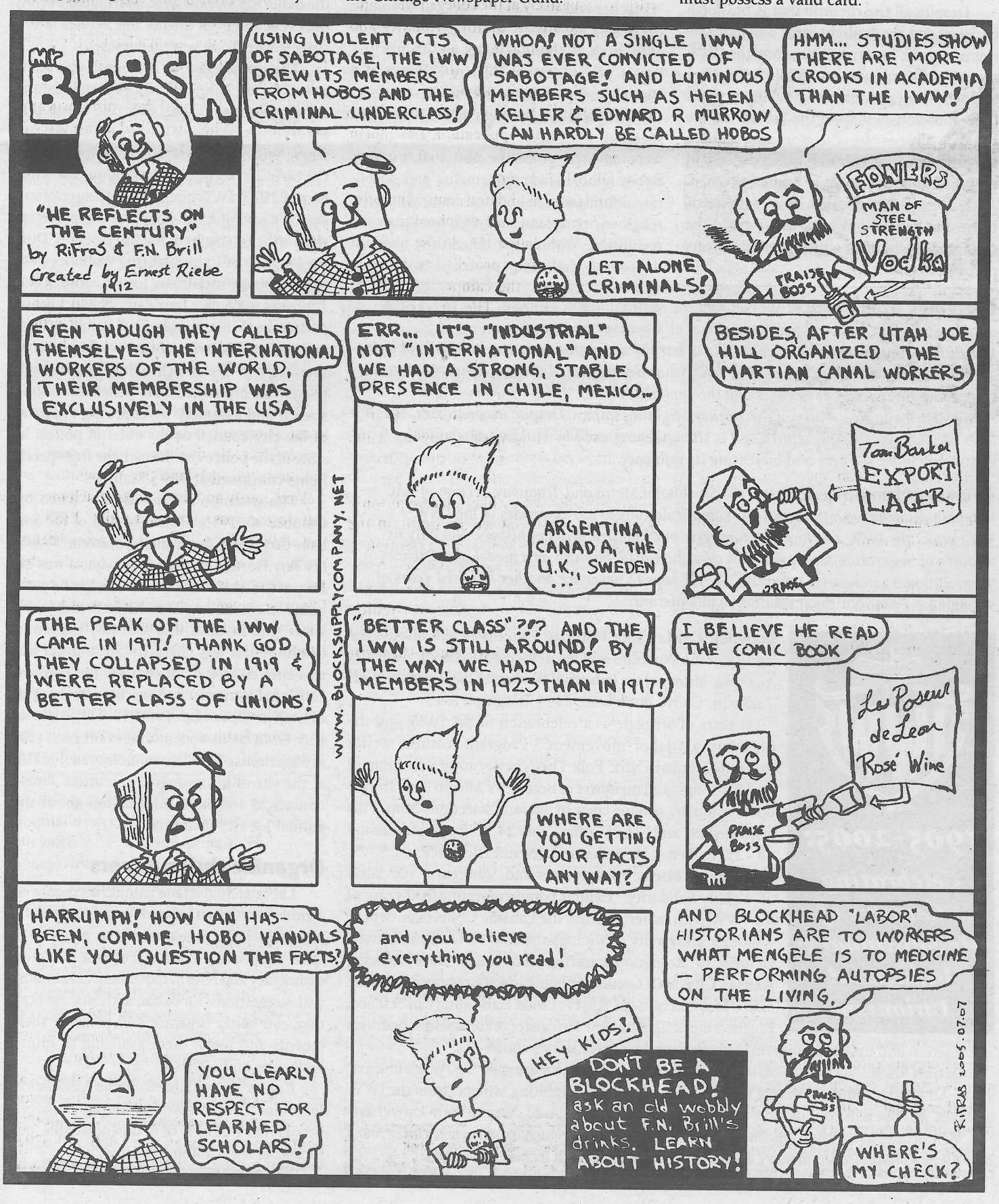
The British Isles Regional Organising Committee will meet July 23 - 24 in Bradford, West Yorkshire. Among the issues to be considered is implementation of the BIROC's decision to seek official registration.

The IWW General Assembly will meet in Philadelphia, Sept. 2 - 4. Any member who will not be present at Assembly wishing to nominate candidates for union-wide office should submit those nominations in writing no later than August 30.

Assembly will nominate candidates for General Secretary-Treasurer, General Executive Board, General Defense Committee Secretary, and International Solidarity Commission, and will elect members to standing committees including the Finance, Industrial Classification and Audit Committees.

Los Angeles area truckers

Following a meeting where 250 troqueros learned that dispatch companies will be paid an extra $80 per load for night and weekend work (since no truckers were involved in the negotiations, no one could say whether the money would be passed on to them), IWW supporters organized a caucus at the Liberty Hill Monument (commemorating the IWW's 1924 San Pedro strike). About 20 companies were represented; drivers will meet regularly to make sure their needs are addressed.



Upstate N.Y. Wobs support Sweatfree Baseball in Cooperstown

BY SOURDOUGH SLIM

"Peanuts here, free peanuts!" IWW members called out to somewhat bewildered passersby on Main Street in Cooperstown, New York, over Memorial Day weekend.

Wobblies from the Upstate N.Y. GMB were out again to help Sweatfree Baseball activities get underway for the summer season. A half-dozen union members and a few other activists passed the IWW's "peanut surprise" and the local *Black Cat Moan* anti-sweatshop newsletter to over 100 shoppers and strollers at the home of Major League Baseball's Hall of Fame.

With the assistance of Pittsburgh IWWs, who fashioned a new and improved series of Sweatfree Baseball cards, Wobblies stuffed ballpark-style bags with peanuts and two free cards to "educate and satiate" fans and citizens about the sweatshop abuses and some news about what baseball is and isn't doing to address issues affecting workers producing their highly profitable licensed,team logo gear.

"This was a very effective way to grab attention at the street level," explained Greg Giorgio, Upstate N.Y. GMB Branch Secretary. "We expropriated the ballpark culture to get people to meet us face to face and get into dialogue about the issues. Once they got into their free bag of peanuts, quite a few actually came back to ask for more of the Sweatfree cards, or perhaps noticed our newsletter."

Before the informational picket, Giorgio mailed a letter to the directors of the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame dedicating the action to Bangladesh's National Garment Workers Federation. The NGWF saw dozens of its members killed and injured in two April factory collapses. The IWW's International Solidarity Commission responded to this tragedy with a fundraising campaign to aid victims' families. Baseball uses many Bangladeshi factories' output for their MLB licensed apparel, but none could be found at the Hall of Fame gift shop on the day of the picket.

"We have reason to believe that these items were removed from the retail space the day we arrived to conduct our action," Giorgio said. "The issue of horrific working conditions, lousy pay, owner and government repression of organizing rights is further compounded in Bangladesh by the spectre of the roof falling in on the workers' heads. Is a MLB-contracted factory in Bangladesh going to be the next one to blow up and collapse?"

The Upstate N.Y. GMB invites all interested Wobblies and activists to contact them through the IWW Directory for further information and assistance with a Sweatfree Baseball action of their own. These activities have been endorsed by the IWW's International Solidarity Commission.



On May 1, members of the Pittsburgh Anti-Sweatshop Community Alliance spoke to Pirates fans outside PNC Park about making conscientious sports-fan apparel choices. They distributed a new edition of their anti-sweatshop baseball cards as a part of the campaign to pressure the Pittsburgh Pirates and Major League Baseball to enforce labor standards for their licensed merchandise in the same way that many universities have. The No Sweatshops Bucco activists were joined by Pittsburgh's anarchist marching band, shown here with Roberto Clemente. (photo taken by PNC Park cop)
On June 3 members of the IWW General Defense Committee marched from Freedom Corner into PNC Park to talk about sweatshops at the Three Rivers Arts Festival. Every time we chose a group to stop and talk with, we found interested listeners and were able to spend several minutes talking about the people who make our clothes.

Nike's model Chinese sweatshops

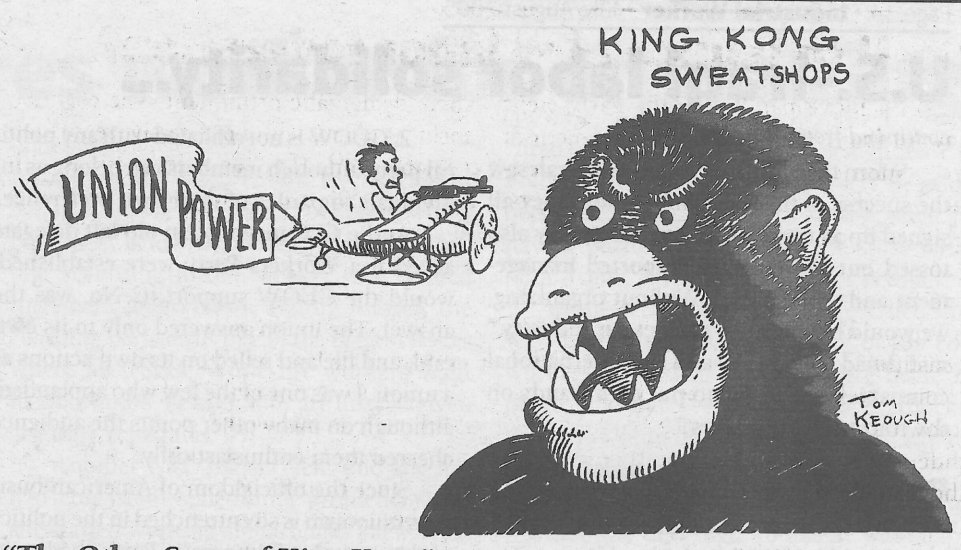
Nike has recently cleaned up its Chinese sweatshops, according to a report in the June 27 issue of *The Oregonian* newspaper, installing ventilation equipment and other protective gear in its contracted facilities and posting notices promising to respect workers' rights.

When Nike released a list of its contractors earlier this year, *The Oregonian* asked to visit its Chinese factories to verify the improvements. Though escorted by a Nike representative who limited the choice of factories to be visited, reporters found that conditions have indeed improved.

But, the paper concluded, "the Golden Prene factory, which makes about 25,000 bags a day and generates $80 million in annual revenues, is hardly a carefree place." Assembly workers work long hours at repetitive jobs, and are separated from families for long periods. Their wages are higher than their farming, but not even close to U.S. standards at an average of $5 a day, including overtime.

Six-day work weeks and 10-hour days are standard. But many workers work far longer hours. Mandatory overtime is a widespread problem, with Nike contractors routinely requiring hours far longer than are permitted under Chinese law or corporate regulations. And while Nike officially respects workers' rights to unionize, China does not allow independent workers' organizations. The company claims it supports freedom of association by "engaging" with China.

Things used to be far worse before the anti-sweatshop movement pressured Nike and other global apparel companies to impose minimum standards. At Golden Prene, workers use to put in nearly 100 hours a week, constantly exposed to toxic chemicals. Now a team of Nike reps monitor conditions, working to protect the company's corporate image even as Nike buyers continue to insist on the cheapest possible price for their apparel.



"The Other Story of King Kong" *is a play written by garment factory workers in Mexico who organized a union at their factory, Kuk Dong, in 2001. Their struggle to organize and the role played by the United Students Against Sweatshops is one of the few examples where international solidarity from the North American Student Movement played a key role in a successful union organizing campaign. Students traveled to Mexico and stood alongside workers at the factory through critical direct action initiatives. "Kuk Dong" is the name of the factory given to it by its Taiwanese owners. It is not an easy name to remember for the workers themselves or their North American counterparts. It is going to be easier to learn about King Kong than Kuk Dong – 10s of student and union groups throughout North America in coming months will perform The Other Story of King Kong. The play will be printed in an upcoming Major League Sweatshop Digest – for copies call Kenneth at 412-241-1339.*

Sweatshop education

BY MICHELLE GAFFEY, PITTSBURGH

I am teaching a 12th grade English class this summer with the upward bound project at Pitt. I have basic objectives that I must meet, but I get to formulate assignments and chose whatever content I want. Thus, since I must prepare them for writing a college essay, writing persuasively at the college level, completing applications, drafting resumes and cover letters, and practicing on the SAT.

I have designed the entire class as a hypothetical situation in which they are applying for a made up university, and on their made up university application, I ask them to compose a persuasive essay that responds to the following prompt:

"Many colleges and universities throughout the United States are collaborating with an organization called the Workers Rights Consortium to help protect the workers who typically sew the campus clothing in sweatshop conditions. The Upward Bound University of Oblivion is considering joining the WRC because our university is founded on a philosophy of social justice, equal rights, and human dignity for all people. In a 3-5 typed, double-spaced essay, please address this issue by supporting the following claim: People should work to abolish sweatshop labor because…"

It probably seems like a basic question to all of us, but what we are doing in the class is discussing how to argue a position in a well-developed and organized essay. Plus, we are reading some articles on sweatshops, examining our major league sweatshop cards, watching one of the National Labor Committee's videos, researching garments at a clothing store, and hearing from a guest speaker.

When I introduced this issue, I was not sure how students would respond. I had them read an article in favor of sweatshops to begin this unit. My class already knew I have been an anti-sweatshop activist (the first day of class I told them I went to jail for it). Here is how they reacted:

Before I even began class, some of my students came up to me and asked, "Now, Miss Gaffey, are you against having the actual factories that these workers work in, or are you against the conditions in the factories." No kidding – they used the words "working conditions." When we talked about some of the conditions, I referred to the testimony from our friends in Bangladesh, and they were horrified!

They *loved* talking about this issue, but they are aware that boycotts and closing the factories are not good for the workers. I did not even have to explain this – they got it from the reading. However – when I asked them if they, like the author of our article, support sweatshops, they said no, but the article made them think about what is actually good for workers. Thus, I am set up for a discussion of freezing labor in countries, certified payroll, etc.

And get this: one student raised her hand and said, "I understand that the workers are treated poorly and don't make much money, but do the bosses get paid well?" I kid you not, folks, she called them "bosses" before I used the expression. I told the class that they are paid well, and my student respond, "Yeah, so he gets cake." It was wonderful. I was not familiar with the expression, but I caught on!

Two days later, we were trying to discuss how clothing, buildings, and images can make an argument, so I dressed very casually in a long skirt. I asked my students what my outfit might communicate about me, and they of course said, "That you're a hippie." I then asked them what a hippie was, and several students said first thing; "that you support *free speech*!" Can you believe that? They did not initially say anything about drugs or anything; their response had to do with speech issues. How lovely!!

Subscribe to the Industrial Worker today
Subscriptions are $15 per year.
Enclosed: ❑ $15 for 1 year
❑ $_____ donation to *IW* Sustaining Fund
❑ $15, bundle of 5 for 6 issues
(ask about special IWW member rates)
Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State: _____
Postal Code: _____
send to: Industrial Worker Distribution
PO Box 13476, Philadelphia PA 19101 USA

CAFTA passes U.S. Senate

The Senate has passed the Central American Free Trade Agreement by nine votes, with 11 labor-backed Democrats providing the needed votes after 12 Republicans abandoned the Bush administration to vote No.

The House of Representatives must take up the bill by July 28. The Steelworkers union has set up a toll-free number to encourage people to call Congress at 866-340-9281, voicing their opposition. www.stopcafta.org

U.S.-Iraqi labor solidarity...

continued from page 1

When the refinery workers at Basrah saw the success of their fledgling union, they all signed up as members. By striking, they also tossed out Halliburton's imported management and work force. "Without organizing, we would be unable to protect our industry," said Awad. "The U.S. and the international companies came here to put their hands on the country's oil reserves."

Politically Aware

The speakers, through their interpreters, also addressed a packed public meeting the next evening sponsored by the Alameda County Central Labor Council at its headquarters in Oakland. They proved themselves to be totally aware of the machinations of U.S. imperialism in Iraq and the Middle East.

Among their observations:

The United States and its allies were only interested in the oil under the Iraqi soil, and not in the fate of the Iraqi people.

The best solution to benefit the Iraqi workers and people would be the immediate withdrawal of the military occupation – that these forces must leave. Contrary to the occupiers' propaganda, there would be no civil war after they left. The Iraqi people were perfectly capable of solving their own problems.

They are totally opposed to the privatization of their industries, as is the design of American capitalism.

The speakers also adamantly opposed the terrorism of the Iraqi armed resistance to the occupation against the civilian population. Working people and unionists had been murdered by them, and the union disassociated itself from this inexcusable violence.

They also appealed to the American labor movement to help their Iraqi fellow workers by getting our unions to come out against the U.S. role in Iraq and work for immediate military withdrawal.

In their remarks, the speakers told us how the GUOW functioned. Their union appears to share many features of the IWW.

1. All officers are elected by the rank and file.

2. GUOW is not affiliated with any political party, although members can belong as individuals to parties of their own preference.

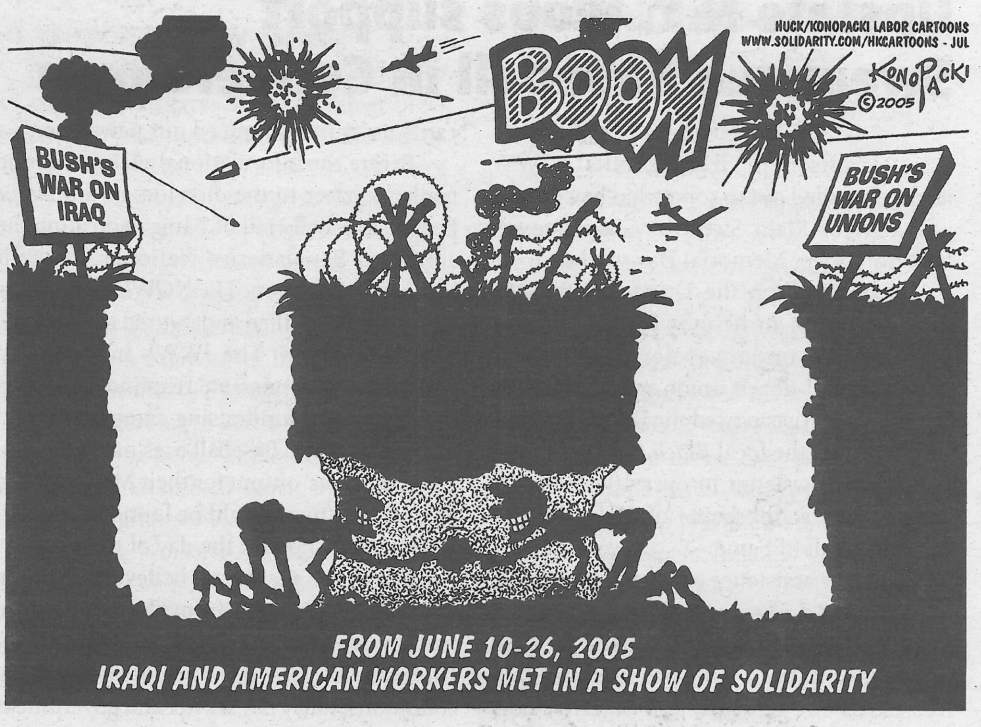
At the CLC meeting, an old left delegate asked if a Workers Party were established, would the GUOW support it? No, was the answer. The union answered only to its own rank and file and relied on its own actions as a union. I was one of the few who applauded, although on many other points the audience cheered them enthusiastically.

Since the officialdom of American business unionism is so entrenched in the politics of the capitalist Democratic Party, the Iraqis' remarks went over like a lead balloon. Ditto with the more leftist audience members who still have an illusion that a Labor Party will emerge from the ashes to "lead" workers to the new society. Like trying to breathe life into a dead boneyard horse.

3. GUOW is also a secular union in a country dominated by rival Muslim sects. As in politics, the union does not support any religious currents. Members may belong to any religion they choose, be it Shiite, Sunni, Christian or none at all. Just as with the Wobblies, pray in your churches or mosques, but leave religion outside the union hall.

To this observer, the labor movement thus operates on class and not religious lines, and is the best hope for unifying the Iraqi people in common cause to oppose the real enemy, the foreign and native ruling classes. It thus becomes the real motor force for democracy in Iraq. The reigning so-called Iraqi government only serves the master class, whether its decisions reflect the dictates of Washington or its native satraps.

4. Direct action by the workers themselves as a class is the only way to achieve emancipation. They demonstrate that every day with their workplace militancy. They also recognize they cannot be successful without international worker solidarity.



Joint U.S.-Iraqi statement

This statement was signed in Washington June 26. It has been edited slightly for space:

We, the representatives of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions, the Federation of Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq, the General Union of Oil Employees, and U.S. Labor Against the War issue this statement at the conclusion of an historic 25-city tour by leaders of the three Iraqi labor organizations in the United States.

We speak in the spirit of international solidarity and respect for labor rights around the world. We speak in the spirit of opposition to war and occupation and for the right of self-determination of nations and peoples.

On behalf of the Iraqi labor movement, we met and spoke directly to thousands of Americans, including workers, union, religious and political leaders, anti-war activists and ordinary citizens.

All of us, both Iraqi and American, were deeply heartened at the solidarity expressed throughout the tour.

We have seen with our eyes and felt with our hearts that the people of the United States do not want the war and occupation of Iraq to continue. We are strengthened in our understanding of the deep commitment of organized labor and workers in Iraq to a unified democratic, independent Iraq, with full equality between women and men ... based on full respect for the human identity without discrimination on any basis.

The tour was an expression of the following key principles:

1. The principal obstacle to peace, stability, and the reconstruction of Iraq is the occupation. The occupation is the problem, not the solution. Iraqi sovereignty and independence must be restored. The occupation must end in all its forms, including military bases and economic domination. The war was fought for oil and regional domination, in violation of international law, justified by lies and deception without consultation with the Iraqi people.

The occupation has been a catastrophe for both our peoples. In Iraq, it has destroyed homes and industry, national institutions and infrastructure – water, sanitation, electric power and health services. It has killed many thousands, and left millions homeless and unemployed. It has poisoned the people, their land and water with the toxic residue of the war. In the United States, more than 1,700 working families have suffered loss of loved ones and thousands more have been wounded, disabled or psychologically scarred in a war that serves no legitimate purpose. The cost of the war has led to slashing of social programs and public services. It has militarized our economy, undermined our own liberties and eroded our democratic rights.

We believe it is the best interest of both our peoples for the war and occupation to end and for the Iraqi people to determine for themselves their future and the kind and extent of international aid and cooperation that suits their needs and serves the interests of the Iraqi people.

2. We strongly and unambiguously condemn terrorist attacks on civilians and targeting of trade union and other civil society leaders for intimidation, kidnapping, torture and assassination. The occupation is fuel on the fire of terrorism.

3. The national wealth and resources of Iraq belong to the Iraqi people. We are united in our opposition to the imposition of privatization of the Iraqi economy by the occupation, the IMF, the World Bank, foreign powers and any force that takes away the right of the Iraqi people to determine their own economic future. We call on nations across the globe to help Iraqis regain their economic capacity, including full reparations from the U.S. and British governments to rebuild the war-ravaged country.

4. We call for the cancellation of Saddam's massive foreign debt by the IMF and other international lenders without any conditions imposed upon the people of Iraq who suffered under the regime that was supported by these loans. The debt is the debt of a fallen dictatorship, not a debt incurred by the Iraqi people. Further, we call for the cancellation of reparations imposed as a result of wars waged by Saddam Hussein's regime, and call for the return of all Iraqi property and antiquities taken during the war and occupation.

5. The bedrock of any democracy is a strong, free, democratic labor movement. We are united in our commitment to build strong, independent, democratic unions and to fight to improve the wages, working and living conditions of workers everywhere.

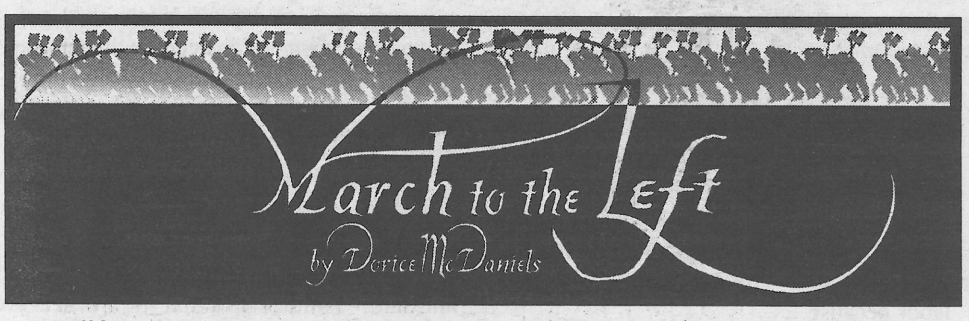
We confront the same economic and corporate interests that have mounted a global assault on workers and labor rights.

We demand strong labor rights in Iraq at the same time that we strive to reverse the erosion of labor rights in the United States and elsewhere around the world where they are threatened. We call for free and independent labor unions in Iraq based on internationally recognized ILO conventions guaranteeing the right to organize free of all government interference and including full equality for women workers.

We support the direct participation of labor and workers' representatives in drafting the new labor code, in determining government policies affecting unions and workers' interests, and in drafting the new constitution. We condemn the continued enforcement of Saddam's decree number 150 issued in 1987 that abolished union rights for workers in the extensive Iraqi public sector and call for its immediate repeal.

6. We commit ourselves to strengthening the bonds of solidarity and friendship between working people of our two countries and to increase communication and cooperation between our two labor movements. We look forward to delegations of Iraqis and Americans visiting each other's countries for mutual support, and to strengthen international understanding and solidarity in our common struggle for peace and establishment of a democratic civil society that respects human rights and freedom.

With the strength and solidarity of workers across the US, in Iraq and internationally, we are confident that we can build a just and democratic future for labor in Iraq, the U.S., and around the world.



It all began with an elderly little woman, half blind, trudging about on her walker. Adele Siegel is an ex-teacher with a burning mission to defend boys and girls against the encroachment of the military in the schools. With this end in view, Peace Guides was launched in the 1990s in Culver City, a town in Los Angeles County.

Direct action here – leaflet those young people involved. "Here are some facts the military doesn't want you to know." (Huh! Someone trying to put something over on us? No way!)

Peace Guides hasn't exactly been popular in Adele Siegel's community. Our monthly leafleting crew, single activist or three or four, covered 37 L.A. high schools, with some repeats, from October 1997 to June 2001. Oh, the devotion of the dedicated few!

Occasionally time allowed a one-on-one encounter: "You see, recruiters make big promises, but the military reneges on those promises. After you've signed up, then you find out what the military is really about. Marching around in the hot sun under a cranky sergeant. Shipped abroad like a piece of baggage to shoot somebody you have no grudge against. I think you rate better than a one-sided show. Get both sides, so's you can make up your own mind. Take control of your life."

Respect. Choice. They aren't used to that. They smile, and tuck the leaflet into a safe pocket.

There came the day of police confrontation at Manual Arts High. But we were ready. "Show us in writing that civil code that prohibits leafleting."

"Which will it be? Move on, or it will be a cell in central jail."

We'd been bandying words for an hour. But now the last lingering student was heading home. A great day's job with 300 leaflets passed out. Hadn't we really won this fight without arrest? But let's put in the last word.

"I suggest you do your homework. Bone up on the first ten amendments of the Constitution."

Human nature is unpredictable. This ugly war has turned many people's thinking into critical channels. The community, so unresponsive to Peace Guides, is rising up. Age and disability have robbed Peace Guides of members, but other activists have seized the torch.

Manual Arts? You wouldn't recognize the place. 25 students, 150 adults, have flocked there from distant points of the southland to attend a peace teach-in. My, how cooperative school personnel are now! And Adele is chairing one group. Flames of resistance are bursting forth in schools all over the country.

Peace Guides hasn't stopped the war. But by gum, we've put a small dent in the system.

BOOKS FOR REBELLIOUS WORKERS



Wobblies! A Graphic History Edited by Paul Buhle and Nicole Schulman

The stories of the hard-rock miners' shooting wars, young Elizabeth Gurly Flynn (the "Rebel Girl" of contemporary sheet music), the first -sit-down strikes and Free Speech fights, the Pageant for Paterson orchestrated in Madison Square Garden, bohemian radicals John Reed and Louise Bryant, field-hand revolts and lumber workers' strikes, wartime witch hunts, government prosecutions and mob lynching, Mexican-American uprisings in Baja, and Mexican peasant revolts led by Wobblies, hilarious and sentimental songs created and later revived—all are here, and much, much more.

The IWW, which has been organizing workers since 1905, is often cited yet elusive to scholars because of its eclectic and controversial cultural and social character. *Wobblies!* presents the IWW whole, scripted and drawn by old-time and younger Wobbly and IWW-inspired artists.

"Tell the bosses to go to hell and buy an extra copy of this wonderful history. Give it to an exploited friend or just leave it in a public place. On the centenary of the IWW, we should be replanting the seeds of rebellion."

—Mike Davis, author of City of Quartz and Planet of Slums ***306 pages, $25.00***

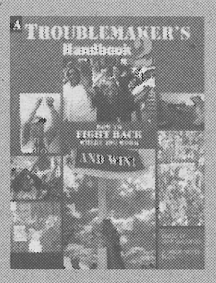


Centenary Belt Buckle

Don't get caught with your pants down ever again! Union Made 3" x 2" Belt Buckle Comes in choice of Antiqued Nickle, Antiqued Brass, Gold Plated and Silver Plated.
$18.00 each

Just Passing Through by Paco Ignacio Taibo II

In this elegant and literate mystery adventure novel set in 1920's post-revolutionary Mexico, Paco Ignacio Taibo II is searching for a hero, specifically a leftist hero, and he thinks he has found him in the person of Sebastian San Vicente. But everyone, including the baffled novelist, is trying to figure out exactly who San Vicente really is. There is some record of San Vicente in FBI records during the Wilson era, and some mention of him in anarchist records and rumors, but the rest has to be filled in. And who better to do this than Taibo? Meanwhile, with Taibo busy in the background trying to resolve the mystery of his hero's identity, San Vicente goes about his heroic avocation of organizing strikes against the capitalists, dodging thugs and hiding out from the Mexican Army. 173 pages, **published at $21.95, now just $10.00**

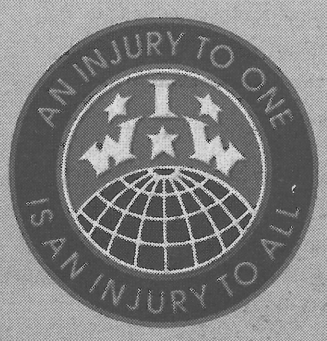


A Troublemaker's Handbook 2: How To Fight Back Where You Work – And Win! Edited by Jane Slaughter

A completely new update to the first edition, this unique resource of organizing and leadership lessons, tactics, and strategies is a collaboration of over 70 authors and hundreds of activists. No matter how seasoned an activist you are, this book will show you new ways to fight back where you work and win!

Chapters include: The Fight Starts at the Workplace, Shop Floor Tactics, Fighting Discrimination, Saving Good Jobs: Fighting Lean Production and Outsourcing, Alliances in the Community, Bringing Immigrants into the Movement, Workers Centers, Leadership Development and International Solidarity. ***378 pages, $24.00***

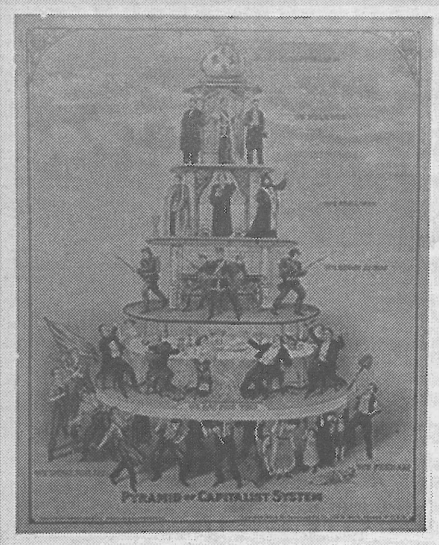
Embroidered Patches



3" circle with IWW logo and "An injury to one is an injury to all" embroidered in black, red, white and golden
$3.50 each
$2.50 each for five or more



IWW Baseball Cap. A beautiful black cap with red under the visor. Embroidered logo in white and red, and "Solidarity Forever" embroidered on the back of the cap. Union made & embroidered, one size fits all. **$16.00**



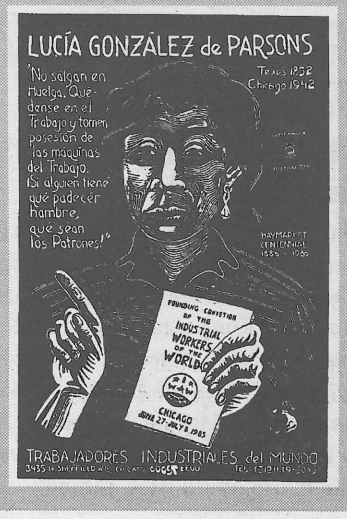
Pyramid of Capitalism poster. 17"x22" full color reproduction of the classic graphic ***$7.50***

Punching Out & Other Writings by Martin Glaberman, edited & introduced by Staughton Lynd
A collection of writings by autoworker, historian and poet Marty Glaberman. This collection reprints Glaberman's classic writings on the union movement, Marxism, the challenges facing radical movements in the 1970s and 1980s, the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, and a selection of labor poetry. Among the gems to be found are Egghead comics, an appreciation of C.L.R. James, and of course a reprint of the classic pamphlet on business unionism, Punching Out. Glaberman celebrated the possibilities of informal work groups both to resist capitalism and to run industry once we've dumped the bosses off our backs. 231 pages, ***$14.00***

Green Bans, Red Union, Environmental Activism and the New South Wales Builders Labourers' Federation
by Meredith and Verity Burgmann
At the height of the Australian building industry boom in the 1970s a remarkable union campaign stopped billions of dollars worth of indiscriminate development that was turning Australian cities into concrete jungles. Enraging employers and politicians but delighting many in the wider community, the members of the New South Wales Builders Labourers' Federation risked their jobs in order to preserve buildings, bush and parkland. The direct impact of this "green bans" movement can be seen all over Sydney. *Green Bans, Red Union* documents the development of a union that took direct action on a number of social issues. Apart from the green bans movement, union members also used their industrial power to support the rights of oppressed groups, such as Aborigines, women and homosexuals. In telling the colorful story that inspired many environmentalists and ordinary citizens, Meredith and Verity Burgmann open a window on a period when Australian workers led the world in innovative and stunningly effective forms of environmental protest.
352 pages, paperback, **$20.00**

NEW POSTERS!





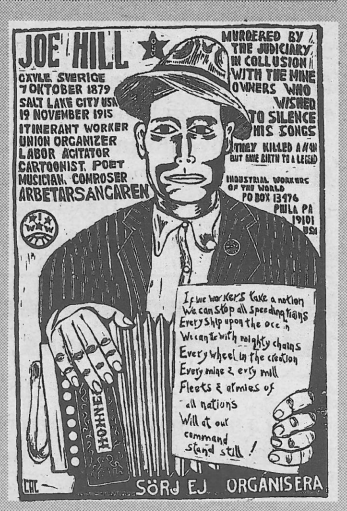
These posters are union printed on heavy stock. They each measure 17"x22". Get all four for $25.00!

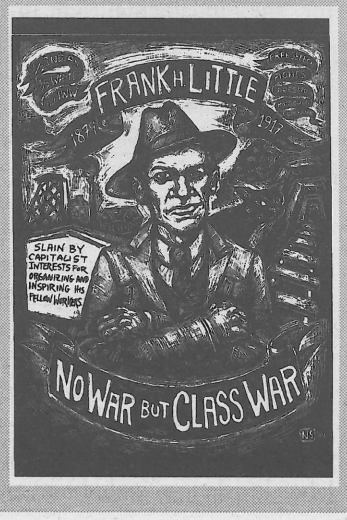
Ben Fletcher by Carlos Cortez printed in blue ink $7.50

Lucy Parsons by Carlos Cortez printed in purple ink $7.50

Joe Hill by Carlos Cortez printed in black ink $7.50

Frank Little by Nicole Schulman printed in dark red ink $7.50





ORDER FORM

MAIL TO: IWW LITERATURE, PO BOX 42777, PHILA, PA 19101

NAME:_____

ADDRESS:_____

CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE:_____

QUANTITY	ITEM	PRICE

***Shipping/Handling**
In the U.S., please add $2.00 for first item and 50¢ for each additional item
Canada: Add $3.00 for the first item 50¢ for each additional item
Overseas: Add $4.00 for the first item $1.00 for each additional item

SUB-TOTAL:_____
SHIPPING*:_____
ORGANIZING FUND DONATION:_____
TOTAL ENCLOSED:_____

Bangladeshi garment workers sit-in

Hundreds of Spectrum and Shahriar garment workers held a one-hour protest May 27 at the site of the April 11 Spectrum factory collapse. The National Garments Workers Federation organized the action.

Emotions ran high as workers met their injured colleagues and family members of the dead. Workers are demanding compensation to the dead and injured, as well as payment of back wages to the 6,000 workers who lost their jobs. Many have lost their homes, and few can afford medical care.

Korean unions plan summer strike wave



The moderate FKTU union federation has pulled out of three-way talks with the government and employers, instead calling a July 7 general strike to protest government labor policies. Some 60,000 workers joined the action (right). The FKTU will join the more militant KCTU in a July 20 national rally and general strike.

South Korean unions are demanding the dismissal of Labor Minister Kim Dae-Hwan, an investigation into the June 14 killing of an FKTU official on a picket line, measures to protect casual workers, and withdrawal of pending labor "reforms." The government and employers are pressing for legislation that would make the labor market more flexible.

The Labor Ministry declared the July 7 strike illegal because it had "political motives," and threatened to prosecute workers who took part. The Korean Employers' Federation has declared that it would refuse to negotiate over what it termed "issues not subject to bargaining," such as employment policies and worker demands for a say in management. The employers denounced what it calls the "rule of force" in labor relations and demanded that the government crack down on unions and jail unionists who violate Korea's strict anti-labor laws.

Korean pilots have been engaged in a prolonged work-to-rule action, and have waged brief warning strikes in an effort to reduce annual flight hours from 1,400 to 1,000 – which they describe as a safety measure. Airlines have bitterly protested the work-to-rule campaign, in which pilots are respecting speed limits while planes are on the ground, tying up runways.

Mongolian police attack protest over unpaid wages

BY CHINA LABOUR BULLETIN

More than 170 police staged a violent crackdown July 7 on workers who were peacefully demonstrating workers at a major state-owned military-industrial enterprise in Baotou City, Inner Mongolia. At least 15 workers were arrested and another three were hospitalized. This is the latest incident in a struggle to recover unpaid wages and other benefits that began in 1999 and involves more than 2,000 of the factory's workers.

More than 300 laid-off workers of the Inner Mongolia North Heavy Industries Group Corp Ltd had gathered outside the gates of the plant July 5, demanding that management pay out large amounts of wages that had been withheld from them since 1998-1999.

Police brutally broke up the protest, but workers returned the next day, shouting "Punish the thugs who assault people."

On July 7, workers returned to the plant gates demanding negotiations, punishment of those who had beaten the workers, and payment of the back wages they are still owed.

North Heavy Industries Group is owned by NORINCO, China's largest weapons manufacturing company and reportedly the country's largest state-owned enterprise. From 1998 to 1999, the company delayed paying the wages of its 30,000 workers, in some cases for as long as two years.

The workers engaged lawyer Xu Jian to seek legal redress. He was arrested Dec. 30, 1999, and later sentenced to four years' imprisonment on trumped-up charges of "incitement to subvert state power."

Union scabbing undermines New Zealand miners

Miners in Huntly, New Zealand, have been locked out by Solid Energy management in retaliation for a 48-hour strike that began April 21. In the lead-up to the strike miners refused to do all work except that necessary to honor an agreement to supply 15,000 tons of coal to the nearby Glenbrook steel mill before any strike action. Now that coal has run out, and the mill is running on coal mined by scabs. The 700 Engineering Printing & Manufacturing Union members are appealing to their fellow EPMU members at Glenbrook to refuse to touch the scab coal.

Vietnamese workers striking to fight for better rights

Many factory workers in Vietnam still suffer from long hours, low pay and poor working conditions, but workers are realizing that going on strike may be their best recourse to get what they want – better rights.

Almost 900 strikes have taken place in Vietnam in the last 10 years, according to a recent government report. Fifty-eight per cent of the strikes were for better wages and the remainder for better working hours, a safer work place and maternity rights.

In the first six months of this year, several strikes at foreign-owned companies have sought higher pay. In May, 10,000 workers of Keyhinge Toys Company, the toy maker for fast food giant McDonald's, took part in the country's largest ever strike in central Danang city. The workers' main demand was for a salary increase.

That same month, all 2,000 workers of Korean-owned International Viet Pan-Pacific Company went on strike, demanding higher salaries and lunch allowances, respect from managers, fair job dismissals and better maternity rights.

Government officials concede that Vietnam's Labor Code sets basic salaries at levels inadequate to allow workers to support themselves, as rates have not been adjusted to take account of higher prices. And many companies pay piece rates that are even lower.

Guatemalan union raided

The Guatemala Human Rights Commission reports that the office of the Union of Education Workers of Guatemala (STEG) was raided in late June. The intruders painted red crosses, presumably to symbolize death, on the walls and desks and defaced several posters. Red paint was spilled on all the files, and papers were also destroyed.

A computer containing extensive information on the National Assembly of Teachers' plans was stolen, and two other computers were destroyed. However, a desk drawer containing money was opened, but the money was not stolen.

Since March, when STEG joined demonstrations against the Central American Free Trade Agreement, unidentified vehicles have been parking outside the union's offices and members have received death threats.

World Labor Solidarity

A COLUMN BY THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMISSION

Spanish CNT fights firings

The National Confederation of Labor (CNT-AIT) has been on strike against AUSSA in Seville since May 16, demanding reinstatement of four CNT members fired for union activity. Another 17 workers were disciplined for joining an earlier strike against plans to contract-out the service that assists motorists whose vehicles have broken down on the highway.

AUSSA is a public-private partnership; it is demanding (with the support of the Communist-Socialist coalition government) that workers give up their right to keep their jobs in the event that the breakdown service is contracted to another firm and sign a no-strike pledge. The fellow workers of the CNT of course reject these demands.

French postal workers strike

The International Solidarity Commission has sent a solidarity message to the CNT-PTT (postal section of the syndicalist National Confederation of Labor), which is waging a one-day strike against the French postal system July 20 in response to unjust discipline against their members and co-workers at the Bordeaux sorting center.

Management is disciplining several workers for participating in a work-to-rule action against unilateral reorganization of the center. The CGT and SUD unions are also involved in the dispute.

Zanon workers win one

An Argentine Appeals Court has annulled a "cram-down" procedure imposed by a bankruptcy judge, which would have opened the way for a venture capital fund or the Zanon family to try to claim control of the factory from the workers' collective that has been occupying and operating the factory.

Australian workers fight labor "reform"

More than 250,000 workers joined national protests against Australian conservative government plans to strip workers of protection from unfair dismissal and force workers onto individual employment contracts. The new legislation would replace a state-administered Awards system under which national negotiations set base pay levels and working conditions for each industry. Workers were then covered by these awards unless they won better terms under a union agreement or agreed to sign an individual contract waiving them. In recent years, employers have been forcing growing numbers of workers to go on individual agreements.

During the last election campaign, Prime Minister Howard pledged that no Australian worker would be worse off due to the changes, a promise he has now backed away from as unrealistic.

The new legislation would encourage individual contracts, make it easier to demand longer work hours, abolish protections against unfair dismissal except in the largest workplaces, undermine union bargaining rights, and end the system whereby arbitrators set minimum wages.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions has hinted that it might launch a general strike against the legislation. Although polls show nearly two-thirds of Australians oppose the changes, the conservatives now have a slim majority in Parliament.

The government says it will fine 136 Melbourne postal workers who walked off the job to join a 100,000-worker march after Australia Post secured an Industrial Relations Commission stay-at-work order.



Australian Wobblies unveiled a new banner in honor of the IWW centenary at Sydney's May Day march.

IWW members joined protests in Melbourne and Sydney, distributing IWW literature and talking with rank-and-file workers who do not trust the sell-out politicians and business union fakirs. Rank-and-file pressure forced the bureaucrats to move beyond an advertising campaign to mount marches and rallies across the country. But much more will be needed if the scheme is to be stopped.

The bosses want to outlaw effective unionism. Already, "reforms" pushed through by the conservatives in the 1970s outlaw "secondary boycott" solidarity action. The award system gives unions standing in the majority of workplaces where they do not have enterprise agreements, and provided some limits on bosses' ability to undercut wages and working conditions. Now they are faced with a choice between organising a fight, or being relegated to the marginal status that has long afflicted business unions in countries like the United States.

Egyptian workers seek independent unions

BY HARRY KELBER

At a meeting of 200 workers and veteran unionists, Kamal Abbas of the Centre for Trade Union and Workers' Services called for "the fundamental right to establish free and independent unions... The livelihood of millions of workers is threatened as a result of the sweeping privatization drive, while the government-controlled General Federation of Trade Unions looks on."

Currently, anyone who joins the work force is obliged to become a member of the GFTU, which follows government policy. While there are a few independent unions of professionals and intellectuals, workers who make up the bulk of the country's 21 million labor force have no independent organization to speak in their behalf.

Topping the agenda is repeal of restrictive labor legislation, including Law 35 of 1976 which allows the GFTU to control election procedures to union offices and prohibits the formation of independent local unions.

Greek strike backs pensions

The General Confederation of Greek Workers held a 24-hour strike June 24 to protest a government plan, under which pension payments will drop by half, the retirement age will rise, and jobs will be lost.

How long must McDonald's workers for a Big Mac?

It takes the average Australian McDonald's worker 17 minutes to earn enough money to purchase a Big Mac at their place of work. In Hong Kong it takes 41 minutes; in Malaysia 86; in South Korea 89; in Philippines 139; in China 233; in Sri Lanka 353; and in Pakistan it takes a McDonald's worker more than 14 hours to buy a lousy burger (not that any of them can afford such a thing).